

Walk With Me – A New Song

# WALK WITH ME



By  
HARRY BRILEY

## Walk With Me – A New Song

# Chapter 13 – A New Song

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### Grief Phase 2011 – 2020

After Anne died, I watched the video *Forrest Gump* for the first time in 2011. I felt just like Forrest at the grave of his wife Jenny in that five-star five-hanky cathartic scene.

When a wife dies, men shave their beard and/or head as a sign of mourning. I was not despairing in 2011. My deep distress occurred while she languished in skilled nursing. Yet, I wanted to do something. Anne intensely disliked old men with tiny ponytails and whenever I teased about growing one, she adamantly stated “*No ponytails!*”



My hair went from shaggy to a full mullet blowing in the wind and shorn on her first anniversary. I often met a gender gap of responses. Men cared less. Women from teenagers to grandmothers were aghast. When I gave the reason, each supported the romance. However, after the haircut, a dozen women praised the clean-cut look and openly disparaged my former flowing locks. Men, take note!

When Anne showed up in my computer screen saver photos, I caught myself saying “*Oh! Hello Anne!*” Too many friends have died too soon. We live such a short time.

I experienced a role reversal with my long-term mentor Pastor Roger Lewis. He walked me through Anne’s final illness. When his beloved Amy died in early 2012, my still fresh loss helped minister to Roger. I highly recommend the common eight-week workshop on grief that I attended in Pleasanton. Roger attended one locally and became a long-term table facilitator for many similar series hosted in Livermore.

I took off my wedding ring two years after her passing. It was the right healing time. During the next year, my thumb unconsciously and regularly sought the missing ring.



Figure 1 -Wedding ring removed – 12/31/2012

## **Charlotte Rittenhouse**

Anne's mother struggled having all three of her children die before her. Even though we moved her into a community with intellectuals her age, she isolated within her apartment and a loud television. Her hearing decreased significantly and she could no longer drive.

### **Final Visits to New Mexico**

On a work trip to Sandia Laboratory in 5/2011, I updated her unused computer and added memory only to find her Internet account expired. That explained her lack of e-mail.

I produced the *Rittenhouse Home Movie* in 6/2011. This DVD (70 min) was roughed into a silent master eleven years earlier (6/2000) from 22 reels of 8mm film dated 1956-1960 and included commercially made shorts. I recorded Charlotte's commentary in 2002 while watching that rough cut during her last visit to Livermore. In 2011, I tightly edited the video, added music, sound effects, and her voice-over. Sound woke up the images. I sent it as a birthday package, but she never viewed the completed project.

Her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in 6/2012 led to a Route 66 road trip with my grandkids. We held a formal birthday dinner at her facility. My grandkids having never met her, felt dragged into the presence of an elderly stranger. I am sure she sensed their discomfort.

### **Estate Papers - Downsizing**

By 7/2012, Charlotte had hospital visits and her facility needed my help. Beyond her Health Care POA, I needed an "Effective Immediately" POA for everything else (except assets in a Living Trust). Still, the IRS only accepted their own custom Form 2848 for filing taxes as a POA. They blocked me from paying her past taxes while she lived.

Her retirement facility was one of the few with an attached skilled nursing unit. Her move into the Health Care section in 11/2012 required a month-long downsizing from her apartment. I used a private team that specialized in moving seniors. They acted as my eyes, ears, hands, and feet. With hundreds of decisions about items, the team worked with me by daily e-mail and digital photos. I could not have downsized alone, even if I flew out for a month. Charlotte died quietly under Hospice care on 12/21/2012.

### **Living Trust Activated**

A Trust does not make one an executor of Estate assets not held in Trust. She did not file taxes for the prior eight years. It was hard to get permission to settle her large tax debts and the doubling tax penalties. That remedy needed an in-person lawyer for New Mexico Probate Court to name me as the Representative for the probated portion of her estate.

Both IRS and State assessed penalties for the eight tax years but some penalties arrived six months after her death. Estate funds paid all back taxes. A year later, her Trust funds became long-term annuities to her four grandchildren since all her children died earlier. Probate paperwork continued until final taxes in 2015. Lessons: Pay taxes on time, put most all assets into a Living Trust, and instruct the executor to distribute using annuities.

### Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

A bi-annual fundraiser book exchange at work and three good local shops offered used books and videos on the cheap. I took in two shopping bags to the work venue culled from my home library and brought one or two sacks back home.

The fascinating Enterprise Security Network (ESN) project took me to Sandia National Lab in Albuquerque in 5/2011. This multi-facility consortium project worked hard to bring in a crucial upgrade to the physical network and its control software before their project budget expired in 7/2012.

As a meeting facilitator, I helped only two clients in my final LLNL years. The newer Six Sigma trained teams that came when LLNL went private under Bechtel took most such calls. It encouraged me to know I still filled a niche by word of mouth for those not needing a highly formal Six Sigma review.

Clients had plenty of work but limited budgets. No one project or task account could afford to pay a specialist fully. As a result, many of us for decades looked for work with an attitude of "Have Gun, Will Travel". In 6/2012, I saw co-worker Pat Duffy leaning against a light pole checking his pager for missed calls. We still used old-style radio pagers because personal cell phones were illegal within the classified site. The scene cried out for a cardboard sign saying "Will work for Project and Task", so I drew one.

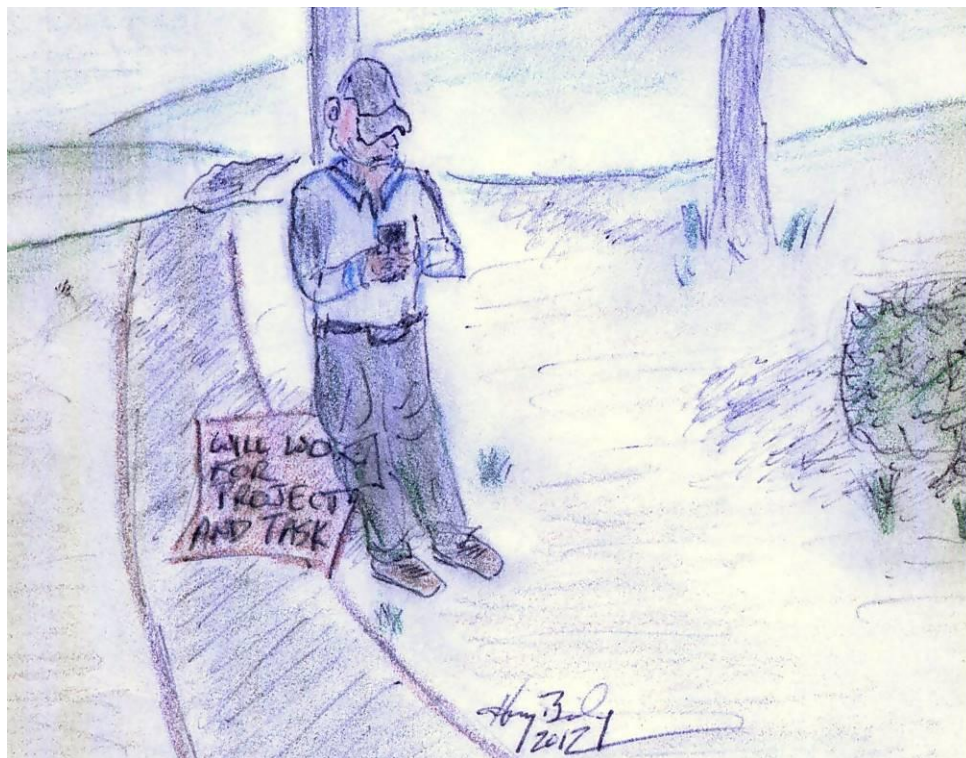


Figure 2 - "Will Work for ..." (H. Briley 2012)



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Security Organization (SO) tapped me to attend their bi-weekly Leadership Development training in 2012. I worked as an ICS employee matrixed to SO, sliding into retirement at 80% time. Even so, SO department head John Lewis wanted us ICS supervisors better known to his SO supervisors. In 10/2012, he treated us to an elegant graduation dinner. Our joint team crosschecked application installation by an external vendor (Sunflower Assets) to manage in-house equipment (weapons, accessories, and protective gear, etc.).



Figure 3 - Sunflower Assets Deployment – 2012/2013

### Last Weeks at LLNL

I worked reduced hours in anticipation of retirement (at 80% in 2012 and 60% in 2013). Due to Presidential sequestration, LLNL shed 450 employees by 6/2013. Instead of cutting all employee wages by 10%, they offered separation incentives based upon years of service. Their generous offer (which rarely occurred) was not something to ignore. I left LLNL and formally retired from University of California (who held my pension).



Figure 4 –Departmental Logos - 2013

Sufficient weeks let me offload corporate memory and boxes of archival material to the current teams for LADS and ESN. I struggled to discard lesser-valued materials after 37 years of careful collection. I filled at least three large recycle carts full, separating out sensitive pages for local burning from other papers destined for a commercial recycler.



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My ICS department held a mass retirement gathering at the LLNL cafeteria in June because so many accepted the incentive. My manager Karen Gunn knew about me through her father Ron Gunn long before she joined LLNL. She took the Gary Rush FAST training with me in Chicago and parlayed that into a rising promotional track. As a result, she put her own insights about me into a parody of the Game of Life board game.



Figure 5 – Harry's Game of Life (K. Gunn 6/2013)

The milestone icons and approximate dates for my 37-year career starts on the left panel:

- 1974 – **Discotheque Glitter Ball** with DoD/DISCO Clearance (Defense Industry Security Columbus Ohio) – I held a DoD Secret clearance with Naval Weapons Evaluation Facility (NWEF) and TERA (Explosives at New Mexico Tech)
- 1976 – I interviewed in spring with an offer at noon as the fastest hire at LLNL
- 1976 – **Red Car** – We moved to California with a breakdown in Mohave Desert in my blue 1971 Plymouth Duster towing a small U-Haul trailer on 7/4/1976.
- 1976 – **Bass Guitar** with Livermore Symphony – William Bagot (Trombone, DPS Department Head) made condition of hire that I play my String Bass (1976-1980)
- 1978 - **Man smoking pipe answering phone behind paper stacks** – Robert Zabik was my second supervisor. He introduced me to the Datapoint 2200 computer and my first private consulting contract. My cartoon sketch was in his honor.
- 1979 – **Award with Commodore PET** – I joined the microcomputer club in 1978. I linked a PET to a Kurzweil Speech system at LLNL and started Briley Software
- 1980 - **No Punched Cards** – I coordinated the RAND Conversion Project to Univac 1100 to move from punched cards to CRT terminals. This project became

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source material for my MSBA Thesis. I wrote HBWord (my Word Processor that pre-dated HTML and Microsoft Word) to compose my thesis without a typist.

- 1983 – ***Young man at desk*** and *aerial view of LLNL* – I was part of many software projects. I wrote the Applicant Tracking system (with Bill Cook) and converted HBWord for the HP-3000. [Note: Flat screens for PCs did NOT exist.]
- 1984 – ***Bowling Ball/Pins*** – Briley Software and Karen’s dad, Ron Gunn, joined efforts to launch LeagueBowl systems. Karen Gunn was the “pert young woman” in those earliest Bowling Magazine ads portraying a happy scorekeeper.

The career path on the right-hand panel continues:

- 1991 – ***Whiteboard Sketch*** – I attended Human Resources Facilitator training (taught by Donna Dare Carvahlo) and passionately adapted that new career skill
- 1993 – ***Foosball Table*** – I overhauled JADS to LADS on the HP-3000 for CMPC to satisfy the DOE Modified Accountability Act for classified documents (1993). I then joined Mike Piscotty’s Enterprise Team (known for his Foosball game table in the work lounge). I next converted LADS to an Oracle database (1994)
- 1994 – ***Whiteboard Sketch*** – Karen and I attended a six-day FAST Training in Chicago (taught by Gary Rush) for speedy application requirements gathering.
- 1994 - ***SLAC*** – My first “Work-For-Others” contract (WFO) was with Stanford Linear Accelerator (SLAC) senior management. I helped them define their high-level budget. This weeklong effort occurred the first day after FAST training.
- 1995 – ***Sandia*** – I licensed and implemented LADS for use at Sandia/CA (another WFO) and wrote a Sandia-specific weapons disassembly inspection module.
- 1998-1999 – ***Moscow*** – Sandy Taylor tapped me as an Oracle Database Designer 2000 advisor (1998) and a WFO systems facilitator (1999) with Melanie Gillipsie (Oak Ridge Plant facilitator) at Russia’s AtomInform (nuclear materials tracking).
- 2003 – ***London/ AWE*** – I was in the first LLNL/LANL team to take intensive Process Improvement training (taught by Steve Watkins, Ian Seath, Sarah Neller) at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE, the “fourth” nuclear weapons lab)
- 2004 - ***Sandia*** – I managed the team’s conversion of LADS to web technology for Sandia/NM (another WFO) and the subsequent merger of both Sandia databases.
- 2005 – ***AWE*** – Karen invited the AWE team to train all LLNL operations managers. I assisted Sarah Neller in training LBL counterparts in Berkeley.
- 2008 – ***DOE Emblem*** – I attended the ribbon cutting for the NNSA Enterprise Secure Network (ESN) and became master editor for all operations documents. I hand-moved their LiveLink file contents to their new MKS document system.
- 2013 – ***Happy Retirement*** – I left ESN and LADS teams on 6/13/2013.

Josanne Lim, 1/20/2014:

*Harry is a poster child of a man loving retirement. The truth is Harry was loving life serving the Lord as he has always done. Harry always looked to teach, encourage, and bless someone! God bless you Harry in [your] adventures.*

### AWANA High School Club

I led every Sunday afternoon a few high school students who for the most part took their faith seriously and began to own it. Many were home-schooled but had no guarantee that their faith came easily as distinct from their parents. Our commander, Tim Augustyn, added this nation-wide high school level to our citywide club under my watch in 2004.

Paul Dane, upon graduating from college, 9/5/2014:

*I do not think you truly know how much I have learned from you! On how to love God and how to love others! It was so great being your [AWANA] student and was so great being your friend! [Paul is an inner-city elementary school teacher.]*

Kyle Shepodd, while in college, 4/24/2015:

*My walk will always be a struggle, but I am fighting hard and the Lord has given me strength. The good things in my life now probably would not be happening if you had not mentored me those years in AWANA. You are the kind of leader I want to become. [Kyle is in computer science working for Hewlett Packard.]*

In my eighth year, 5/2012, three students secured the difficult Citation award for ten years of Bible verse memory and reading the entire Bible during their high school years. Only a minority of students within nationwide AWANA complete this 10-year award.



**Figure 6 - AWANA Citations for 2012 (Kim Ross 5/2012)**  
Students L-R: Nathan Bolin, David Wilkins, Kevin Ross

I use the same AWANA reading cycle as the students to read the Bible and footnotes in full every four years. At one to four chapters a night, I am more consistent at a relaxed pace than using a marathon read in a single year (and never getting past February)



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Two years later, three seniors in three denominations from three high schools earned their Citation Award in 2014.



Figure 7 - AWANA Citations for 2014 (B. Horne 5/2014)  
 Students L-R: Kathryn Wilkins, Sarah Dane, Andrew Crago

Our club fielded a quiz team and games team in 3/2015 in Sacramento. It was our first away-from-home tournament. I co-judged the essay and speech competitions. In April, I presented my off-the-cuff idea of radio transmission as a faith analogy with the students. Instead of AM or FM modulations, KGOD broadcasted via HM (Holy Modulation).

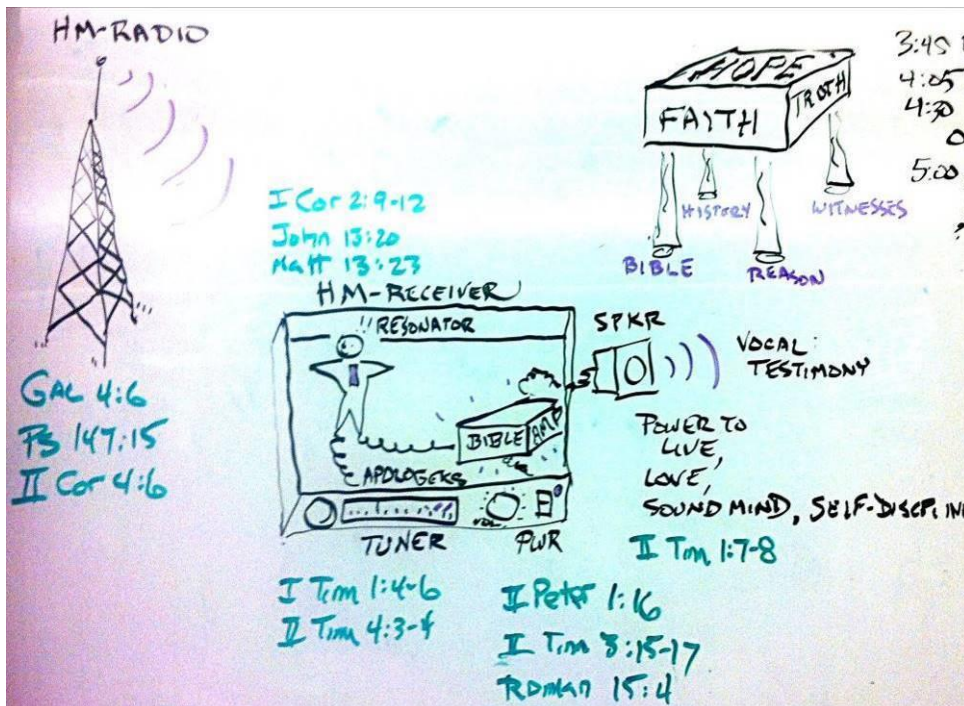


Figure 8- KGOD Radio Analogy- 4/2015

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Tim started at a local gym in 2016 and he invited me as a partner. Exercise is a dirty word and I enrolled only after he drove me there three times a week. I continued after he could no longer go. While not losing weight, it improved my long absent muscle tone.

In 3/2016, we fielded teams in Sacramento, where I co-judged the essay and speech competitions. At the end of the school year, students typically give a thank you card, but one unexpected hand-written notecard mid-year felt deeply affirming.

Daphne Gwozdz, as a junior in high school, 12/2016 (extract):

*Your love for God is so evident. I love how you dive deeper into His Word to find answers [and reasons to] love him. I picked Psalm 146:5-6 to give to you because it reminded me of you. [She enclosed a hand-colored poster in cursive script of those verses.] Your hope is always in the Lord. I love having you as a teacher. Thank you for all the work you do for our Journey group.*

In 2017, my thirteenth year, the two Citation winners were only five years old when Tim recruited me. Being the same leader over time promoted a grapevine of among parents and upcoming students regarding known expectations. While inbound freshmen might think I am a stern headmaster, we all easily think of AWANA as family.

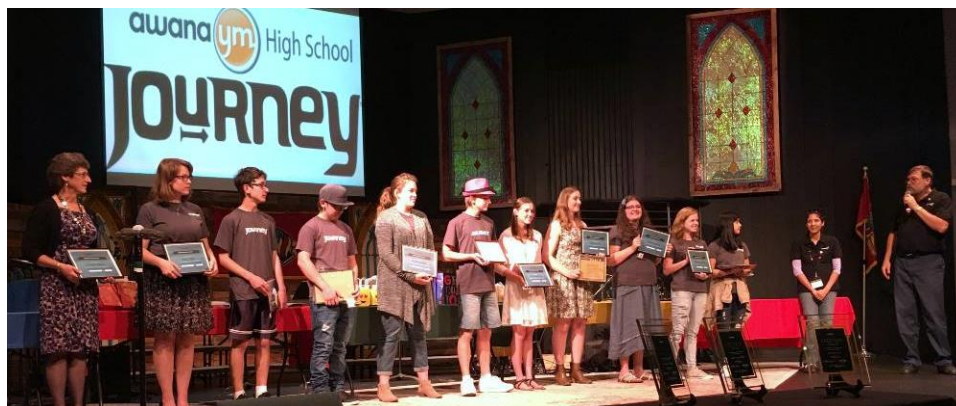


**Figure 9 - AWANA Citations for 2017 (S. Sargis 5/2017)**  
Students L-R: Julia Collins and Rachel Sargis

The ten high school students who attended our 2017-2018 Journey club were intentional about their faith. Carolyn Gaziano co-led, her second year, as we alternated weeks leading and enhancing the official AWANA material (analytical apologetics 2017-18).



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**Figure 10 – AWANA Journey Awards for 2018 (S. Powell 5/2018)**

Two students and a mom (the Children’s Director) completed their 10-year Citation awards including journaling their Bible reading. They trusted me with their private thoughts about biblical passages and let me annotate their detailed journal pages.



**Figure 11 - AWANA Citations for 2018 (S. Powell 5/2018)**

L-R: Hannah Lipp, co-leader Carolyn Gaziano, Sandie Powell, Brooke Powell

Hannah Lipp, upon graduation, 8/2018:

*It meant a lot that you came to my [homeschool] graduation. You have been such an inspiring teacher throughout my high school years and always answered my questions I had spiritually quickly and thoroughly. You will probably never know the huge impact [AWANA] Journey had on me. I know you will continue to influence younger generations for Jesus in a positive way. Those kids will get sound Biblical knowledge for sure. Thank you for being such a great teacher.*

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Our Journey club started the 2018-2019 high school theme of holding to a public faith with a civil and an unpretentious gentle spirit. We had no seniors in 2019.

Students invited me their family graduation parties, homeschool joint graduation ceremonies, baptisms, and special events. After students graduated, I tried to stay in minimal contact during their college years to field questions or just to give a word of encouragement on social media.

In 2013, I gave the benediction prayer for the Boy Scout Eagle Court for one of my AWANA students at a local LDS (Mormon) sponsored troop. This was a first for me and probably for them, but how often does a high school friend become an Eagle? I wore my Sea Explorer insignia on my suit lapel in solidarity. After defining a benediction (bene=good, diction=words) and included compliments for this troop for owning values counter to secular California, I invited any to say ‘Amen’ if they agreed with the sentiments. A loud affirmative collective “*amen*” closed my one-page prayer.

Sarah Dane, Citation winner in 2014, then as a 2018 college graduate:

*My good friend: It meant so much to me to receive that [graduation gift of] encouragement during my first feeble steps towards adulthood. Harry, you have always been such a comforting soul and a strong role model of how we should serve the LORD and love the world. I am so thankful for YOU!*

I led an experimental session at the local 10/2019 AWANA Conference to discover how much of the Bible we could reproduce if authorities confiscated our Bibles, burned our churches, and imprisoned our pastors. This occurs in Oromo areas of Ethiopia (Wycliffe Bible Translators, Fall 2019) and recent crackdowns upon house churches in China.

Several Chinese adults and teens attended my session. The adults said that their mainland friends vouched for my sample scenario. Like Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* (the book, not the film), these adults said my experiment convinced them to renew their efforts to memorize more of the Bible. Bay Area faith demographics have tectonically changed. All conference recognition awards went to Chinese ethnic churches.

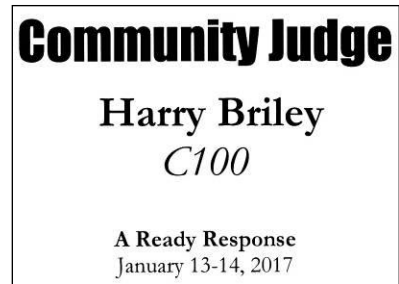
Some things age well. Several homeschooled AWANA students participate in Christian Youth Theater. They put on *Godspell* in 2019. Kids ages 8 through 16 did an admirable job with tips of the hat to modern cell phones and a bi-racial Jesus (a homeschooled eighth grader) who could belt out the songs and memorized scripture lines of the play. I had no idea this old musical would interest this upcoming generation. This 1971 musical allowed leaders to observe that this was not "just a play" for these specific kids.

During the 2020 quarantine, we had two Citations awarded by the end of summer. Both Josiah Shumacher and our club co-commander Barbara Augustyn worked with me all summer to finish their AWANA workbooks and full reading of the Bible. Josiah worked best by telling his readings in person. Barbara elected to journal her readings.

### STOA Youth Forensics

In 2011, I judged at my first speech and debate contest for home-schooled California STOA clubs. They held it at Trinity. They hold events where they can find facilities and sufficient local community judges. They used me again in 2016, my second year, for the winter speech and debate contest held at the local Las Positas College.

I judged two long days of STOA youth speeches held at the college in 2017, my third year. I judged the academic categories, five flights of seven different students, each flight a different kind of speech (Apologetics, Mars Hill, Extemporeaneous, Expository, and Persuasive). In two categories, each student chose three hidden topics. They spent four minutes preparing speech for one of the three topics.



For my fourth year in 2018, I judged two long days at the college. My assignments fell again to some of the academic speech categories, five flights of eight different students, each flight a different kind of speech (Mars Hill, Cold Reading, Apologetics, Extemporeaneous (Current Events), and Original Oratory). It took us judges a full hour between flights to write up useful comments for each student.

The hallways looked like a *Future Lawyers of America* convention with courtroom attire with their rolling luggage full of laptops, legal briefs, and card files. The forty-speech slice that I team-judged demonstrated competence that far exceeded my peers during college. I definitely felt a wow factor. If you challenge these kids in court, you will lose.

Their demographics intrigued me. STOA is a home-school conservative forensics society (ages 12 to 18) affirming an evangelical shorter form of the Nicene Creed. The photo below was a visual slice of about 200 speakers. Secular elites demand diversity with spotty success while this multi-club tournament was fully multi-ethnic and integrated. Besides a solid balance of male/female, my forty student speakers were Caucasian (Ukrainian, American, French, and Mexican Spanish), Asian (Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean), and American black, and various bi-racial blends.



Figure 12- Hosting Speech and Debate Team (Response 1/2018)



## Walk With Me – A New Song

One disfigured boy (a misshapen head) made it into the final round (flight five), spoke to his disability and unsuccessful surgeries, but expected no favors. He was in this tournament to win. Regardless of their multi-hued multi-lingual multi-church and/or disabled backgrounds, each speaker spoke intelligently for Jesus within their lives.

The most impressive six-minute speech for me was a young girl comparing Hinduism and faith in Jesus. Her apologetics felt like a well-researched college paper using a woman from the untouchable caste as her storyline interest. She described how the Hindu elite due to belief in reincarnation treated the dusky brown untouchables as animals, not even close to being human. I was about to ask for a citation via my judge's sheet when she gently closed saying "*And that woman was my grandmother.*"

I judged the 2019 tournament (my fifth); one set (7 students) using modern films to explain faith, and two sets of apologetics (16 students). They seek unfamiliar judges to keep students on edge. I received another assignment if I knew a student within a set.

## Faith

### Teaching Faith History

See: <https://brileyh.weebly.com/theological-papers.html>

Ever since high school, my role of teaching within the Christian community meant significant writing and personal research. Sometimes, in team-teaching, we borrowed audio or video lectures, amending the material by answering attendee questions.

In 2011, I presented eleven controversial sessions in a seminar called *Science and Sharing the Faith*. This used some material that I wrote in prior years about evolution but repackaged to include other science branches, not just issues about origins.

I presented two ten-week seminars in 2013. I used the DVD from Lee Strobel's book on the *Case for Faith* (answering anti-faith questions raised by Charles Templeton's 1996 book *Farewell to God*). I next wrote a seminar about the overall *History of God's Holy Spirit*, including an overview of the recently renewed long-standing conflict between the charismatic and cessation camps over the Baptism into His Spirit.

In 2014, I wrote a 10-week 30-minute seminar on the *Holy Days of Israel*, showing how Jewish communities observed them today, and how each fits with belief in Jesus.

In 1/2015, I led four mid-week sessions for the pastor's Wednesday Bible class. My topics dealt with life after death, dating of Bible passages by skeptics, and loose threads found in Passion Week. My Wesleyan sympathies riled up a young strict Calvinist.

His vitriolic attacks led me to write a 24-page reflection about the sovereignty of God and describe how humans perceived that role. I called it *God as Ultimate Game Master (or How Game Theory and Computer Simulations Changed My Understanding of God)*.

Peer reviews in 2016 led me to revise *God as Ultimate Game Master*. Unknown to me, Randy Alcorn published *hand in Hand* in 2014. He compared Calvinist and Arminian understandings of an inscrutable God. One of his analogies was similar to my paper in which passengers on a ship freely move on board but only the captain affects the ship direction. My paper remains contributory given that none knew my described computer concepts fifty years ago, much less during the Reformation era.

Since many theologians cannot explain on-demand parallel multiprocessing or object-oriented event-driven embedded behavioral database logic, I have become less concerned about how God maneuvers us to become believers than I do about as many people as possible becoming heart-level believers.

## Walk With Me – A New Song

A Sunday class I attended asked me for a Thanksgiving topic on *Evidences that American Identity was based upon Christian Faith*. These 30 pages quoted early American material that included 18 pages from my earlier papers: *America – A Christian nation?* (2001-2005 with Aleena Gilbert) and the *American History of Thanksgiving* (2004). This new compilation fully replaced both prior papers

Michael Kirby, leader of that Bible class, 9/2015:

*I have read hundreds of books, articles, and magazines ranging from serious science to satirical farce, from the loosest of fiction to the ultimate Truth. With all of that and the experiences the Lord has provided, I do not have [sufficient] words to express what you have meant to me... Friend, Teacher, Confidant, Advisor, Mentor, Student, Rock, Touchstone ... all true and much more. The Lord has created much that speaks to the truth of his majesty. But, when I see you, no other proof was necessary. Random chance could not generate one who reflects so much of our Savior. [Michael works in the data management industry.]*

Our Adult Education coordinators in 2018 asked for two six-week summer seminars on *Church History through 1550AD* and then *American Church History since 1600AD*. My wealth of material tumbled out at a dizzy pace. However, I met my match during a Coptic Church tour in August in which the deacon (a professor at UC Davis who spoke alongside Ravi Zacharias) stunningly reduced the same material to 30 minutes.

I created a six-week seminar in 2019 on the *Case for Faith*, offered twice, with five interested adults in each outing.

I taught with Paula Leigh again (See: Teaching Greek and Hebrew), this time using a five-week hour-long version of my 2014 *Holy Days of Israel* seminar. Paula brought in her own Judaica experience. Five or six different adults attended any particular week.

Given low turnouts, our crew ceased offering seminars to re-think how to build interest. By then, I was booked solidly in the same timeslot for the ByLaws overhaul team, which itself became a Zoom InterNet meeting due to the 2020 quarantine.

It is long past due for me to get back to my primary calling.

## Teaching Greek and Hebrew

See: <https://brileyh.weebly.com/greek-hebrew.html>

At Trinity in 9/2012, I created an experimental *Biblical Greek for Beginners* starting with word familiarity using the English alphabet. The church staff winced at the proposal since it was not the typical Bible Study nor used published Baptist materials. It operated like a college course with only a few brave adults. For the second quarter, I started using the Greek alphabet. This experimental vocabulary-centric approach exceeded my expectations. We practiced translation with several easy New Testament passages. As an exam, three students read phonetically from I Corinthians 15 at adult reading speed and each made a workable translation of 80% of the words.

Bolstered by that success, I started a three quarter run at Biblical Hebrew in 5/2013. The oral vocabulary went well, but the Semitic script required more intense decoding for the novices when translating Torah passages. We thus purchased an easy children's book with my running commentary for reading words and Sephardic pronunciations.

Las Positas College listed my Biblical Greek course for three quarters in 2014 for their Community Education program. They made me an employee but the roster never filled and thus dropped from their catalog. Joshua Collins from the 2012-13 test run wrote, “*Best class ever. The [Las Positas] students don't know what they [missed]!*”

In 2016, I first publically posted both syllabus files for *Biblical Greek for Beginners* and *Biblical Hebrew for Beginners*.

In the fall 2016, I joined with a Bat Mitzvah'ed teen, Paula Leigh, to co-teach a seminar in the *Hebrew Alphabet (and some words)*.

In 4/2017, our local church revamped adult small groups. It was the right time to re-offer *Biblical Greek for Beginners*. The updated syllabus used their questions and tips how some learn better with visual props. Therefore, I carried around a stuffed toy lion to explain prepositions. The highest four exams tied at 58%.

I immediately reoffered the Greek course (a third time) in 10/2017 through 2018. Six adults and a 12-year old boy took that challenge. The adults averaged 70% for a passage in Ephesians (50% without helps). The boy stunned the adults with an 82% to receive a Greek interlinear New Testament for his top score.

Given the 2020 national quarantine, I recorded my *Biblical Greek for Beginners* a fourth time on-line. I had advice and several attendees from Miller Baptist Church, Marin County. Their pastor/author Kent and Katie Philpott interviewed me for their community TV in 2019. My Greek videos improved with a studio microphone and lighting. An older surprised adult reached the high score of 78%, who earlier predicted only 25%.

### Christmas Music

Every December, Christmas season only began once I sang with the Valley Concert Chorale for Part I of Handel's Messiah. Ninety minutes full-lung with three rows of the Bass section invigorates the soul. Now Hanukkah and Advent could begin!



Figure 13 - Messiah Sing Invitation (The Independent 11/15/2018)

For a 2017 Carol Sing at another local church, I had a tragedy after rehearsal. My bass fell in my driveway and broke at the neck/body joint. I felt so stupid! I soaked the break with glue and drilled through the ebony fingerboard. A wood screw pulled it together overnight. I slowly tightened the strings for the afternoon rehearsal. The glue was not yet dry but the screw held. I hoped my poor man's repair held for the evening concert. The late Hildi Kang, my cellist friend, hoped my bass would not explode in pieces on her.



Figure 14 - Carol Sing at Cedar Grove (T. Bolin 12/2017)

Three hundred showed. The bass played as if undamaged. It scared me that only an inch of a screw and glue held four thick metal String Bass strings.

### **Officiating for Memorial Services**

For my first time, I presided at a memorial followed by an internment service in 2016. Catherine Burton, my next-door neighbor for 35 years, chose me early on when her husband Lester died. Although much of the family had no affiliated daily faith, I engaged family members to participate as much as they felt willing. Losing Anne and the grief care workshop after her death built up my empathy with them.

Catherine Burton, 3/2016:

*Thank you for being there for my family and me at this trying time. Being the Officiate at the memorial service [for my husband Lester] means so very much to all of us. You are such a wonderful neighbor not only to me, but to each and every one in our neighborhood. God has blessed you with faith, compassion, and a true sense of understanding. You are a remarkable man.*

In 11/2019, I officiated the local memorial and internment of Catherine Burton herself. As neighbors for 39 years, she asked the family to use me for her own memorial. It was the ninth anniversary of Anne's passing, which I mentioned in the service.

Her sister Doris DeLoach:

*I thank you so much for the beautiful service and your words at Catherine's service. Catherine and Lester thought so much of you and appreciated you as their neighbor all those years and knew if they needed anything you were right there for them, as I know they were there for you. Thank you for allowing me to read scripture and to honor my sister. I know that Catherine's family appreciated everything you did to ease some of the grief that the family was dealing with. May God continue to bless you richly. I know you honor Him by reaching out to those around you with your testimony.*

Co-coordinator, Terry Burton, Catherine's son:

*Thank you so much for being a great neighbor to my mom and dad for all these years. What you did for the service was top notch. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you do for the family.*

Co-coordinator, granddaughter Keri Bilke:

*Thank you for honoring mom/grams! We appreciate your time, love, and support not only today but over all the years. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We are blessed to have you. Lots of Love.*

### Church Theater

I previously played pit orchestras or did several short sketches. However, we rehearsed all spring for an hour-long play for Trinity's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 6/2012. The play zipped through snippets of main Bible stories. In one scene, I play Moses returning with the Ten Commandments saying, *"I kept him down to ten; you should have seen number 87."*



Figure 15 - Trinity Drama Troupe- 6/2012

L-R: Sarah Dane, Rebecca Henderer, Lorin Jensen, Debbie Jalanavich

### California Southern Baptist Convention

I attended 2014 California Southern Baptist Convention in **Fresno** being newly retired. I found it sparsely attended, perhaps because pastors saw each other quarterly at county-level meetings. Unless something drastically rocked the boat, delegates from long distances appeared to stay home.

Their Golden Gate Seminary moved in 2014 to southern California and renamed as Gateway Seminary. Golden Gate and Fuller extension were the two (and too few) seminaries that held a traditional Bible focus. Gateway built a local extension campus in Fremont on Mission Blvd using former church property (closer to Livermore).

At the 2016 California Southern Baptist Convention in **Sacramento**, I unknowingly sat in the same pew as my former pastor since 1999. Thinking he lived out of state, Pastor Meek caused me to jump when he finally caught my attention. So, hugs all around.

I attended the 2017 California Southern Baptist Convention in **Riverside** to see how the statewide denomination lived faithfully for Jesus. There were no controversies aired and no votes required. They met one block away from California Baptist University where some of my former AWANA students attend but none of us knew in advance to meet up. However, the trip allowed me to visit my Schroeder cousins afterwards.



### Community TV Sunrise Services

For the Easter SON-Risen community service in 2011, I videotaped Pastor Meek in Civil War garb on horseback as Union General Pleasonton for community TV (DVD, 28 min.) The city was named after the General, even though an early clerk modified the spelling.



Figure 16 - Pastor Jim Meek as Gen. Pleasonton - 4/2011

That became my most complex production with three video cameras, first use of an animal in the floodlit stage area, and Pastor Meek speaking from a well-behaved beautiful horse. The community TV channel folded that year and subsequent services at Shadow Cliffs Park continued without broadcast video.

For subsequent sunrise services, my goal was to put many young and new faces at the microphone. Since this non-church venue had a history of such experimentation, attendees welcomed the newer presenters of the ancient message and short sketch.

During Easter, I struggled with the Romanian greeting of “Adevarat a Inviat!” (“Indeed, He has risen!”). Emil, my Romanian friend, commiserated with my pronunciation.

### Community TV Interview

After reading Kent Philpott’s 2011 book *Awakenings in America and The Jesus People Movement*, an e-mail exchange resulted in a 3/2019 interview in Marin County for his YouTube channel called *Why We Are Christians*.

Material from this memoir easily filled the hour-long interview. I linked that two-part interview to my web and YouTube sites. Readers can find them listed under my name on Kent’s YouTube channel as well.

- (Episode 129) 1 - "Jesus became my friend at age 9"
- (Episode 130) 2 – “Baptized into God’s Holy Spirit”



### **Shin Bone Miracle**

In 8/2012, I jammed and broke a middle toe (as x-rayed) that needed a walking cane for over a month. This pain carried through my family quest trip to Michigan. Many private prayers were asked, but I saw no noticeable difference for this injury. I gritted it out.

In spring 2013, I clambered into a pick-up bed at work, slipped, and severely bone-bruised my shin on the tailgate. I am in denial about my aging bones.

Back then, Trinity (while non-Pentecostal) routinely offered prayers for physical healing, repentance, or salvation when someone walked forward to anyone on the prayer team at the service close. Weeks went by and the team often stood up front feeling unused.

The Sunday after the shin wound, I did not walk forward thinking *“This will soon pass.”* and *“It’s not that big of a deal.”* and of course, nothing improved. By Wednesday, the official medical prognosis was eight more weeks of *“hurting like h\_\_\_”* (the doctor’s phrase) as there was no possible medical intervention.

Therefore, I asked a friend to pray specifically for me after a Wednesday Bible Study. He said that he was most uncomfortable praying in public. I waved off to a quiet space where we could pray. He replied, *“You do not understand ... you are the Public.”*

Well, it was obviously a time to introduce the verses: *“to pray one for another”* and *“where two or more gathered together in my name”*. His prayer was sound and faith-filled ... and he said, *“You know, if God answers this, I am on the uncomfortable hook to offer a prayer of thanks too ... in Public.”*

You can surmise the rest. On Sunday, I tossed my pride aside and hobbled forward for public prayer. The team member, Paul, did a mental backflip wondering why I of all people needed to walk forward. He barely uttered a one-sentence prayer before the worship service moved into the final song. The clock showed 9:30am.

By noon, after it occurred to me to check, I could hop up and down on the wounded leg without any pain whatsoever. My friend did well with his second prayer ‘in Public’.

### **Pastor Search Team – Two Years**

Trinity Church elected me to a team of nine to replace Pastor Meek who moved out of state in late 2014. This elected team of nine varied in ages and stages, 4 women and 5 men, where most of us had not worked together beforehand.

We met weekly in the meticulous search process for 14 months only to have our three leading candidates pull out, mostly due to the high housing costs in the Bay Area. We started over, reposted the position in 2016, and gathered new applicants among the potential inquiries. It felt like matchmaking.

By 9/2016, after two full years, we brought a pastor to Trinity. Pastor Bill started formally in 10/2016 and our team formally disbanded over dinner with him.



**Figure 17 - Interviewing our candidate Pastor via Skype - 2016**

L-R: Tamara Wysock, Peggy Mohr, Larry Lopez, Bill Craig, Michelle Chandler

### **ByLaws Team – Two Years**

Trinity Church tagged me in 11/2018 for a team to revise our Church ByLaws to implement an elder-led congregation having less committees. Without the many weekly hours with my dedicated colleagues, I would dawdle over the long two years. We used focus groups between our meetings. The congregation voted approval on 12/6/2020.

During spring 2019, our church leased our educational building to a well-funded secular school for ten years. That mortgage dragged the church under financially and the school provided vital funds in exchange for the building lease. The offices moved into the Worship center. My roles were drywall mudding and stringing twenty Internet cable runs from our router through the ceilings to numerous wall outlets. The pastors preferred wireless instead of the new faster wired network. This illustrated the preferences of a generation that grew up with cell phones.

Under the 2020 quarantine, the school skipped or delayed some payments and many people ceased to attend (and donate) pushing us over the precipice. By mid-December, we published the property for an institutional sale to avoid defaulting on our mortgage.

### **Gideon Bible Distributions**

During my first year with the Gideons International in 2013, I helped hand out generic pocket-sized New Testaments near Livermore middle and high schools. It felt way outside my comfort zone. However, as long as I was courteous to the students without a hard sell, many students responded in kind.

Gideons rules ask us not to initiate conversations beyond a simple greeting nor block the sidewalks. We inform the police and school office of our presence as good citizenship.

In 2014 onwards, I helped the team in Pleasanton and Dublin. At some schools, we barely kept up with demand disappointing students who arrived too late. Other schools had a strong Islamic or Hindu population who ignored us completely, even coldly.

An eighth-grade girl said she was Jewish as she strode by. I greeted her with “*Baruch Atah*”. After watching me at a distance some minutes, she came over and said she would like a copy after all. I said, “*I do not want you to get in trouble with your Mom.*” She insisted that would not be an issue and made a second request. I gave her a copy.

Too many students made a point to say that they were atheists as they walked by. Yet, when I still greeted them warmly, a few circled back to stand nearby. They seemed intrigued why this stranger did not treat them poorly. They never took a copy but I was keenly aware of several evaluating eavesdroppers.

#### **Odor, Light, and Salt**

*Old fashioned scriptural faithful believers  
ridiculed, rejected, reviled, and risqué  
by wealthy, powerful, influential pay  
since from ancient empires and on thru today.*

*His holy disciples Jesus called to be  
salt and light to the world, us around needing.  
Paul said we (and Biblical faithful praying)  
are unto God himself an odor pleasing.*

*To intellectuals and powerful,  
our odor offensive, a deadly stench be.  
Our light seems dim bulbs as a community,  
and our salt, like a sting in a wound fiery.*

*But these street credentials are lasting for me.  
The odor was sea breeze, such smell refreshing.  
The light colorfully was eye opening,  
and antiseptically, the salt so cleansing.*

- Harry Briley, 5/24/2014

### Other Faith Activity

There were receptions to meet with individual missionary friends (or friends of friends) on furlough and pastors in the area. At a Pastors' Breakfast in 2012, Father Leo Arrowsmith, retired from St. Innocent's Orthodox (the Old Russian Branch in America) sketched my profile. He painted ornate Russian-style icons and displayed some at the Christian Art Fair at Trinity.



The sabbatical from adult teaching led to an e-mail coach role with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. I started training, background checks, and evaluation interviews. Upon graduating in 4/2015, my AWANA commander Tim Augustyn identified my passion for helping others follow Jesus.

Tim, upon my completed training:

*You will make a fantastic mentor. You are one of the most grounded, educated, God-fearing and loving man towards the Lord I have ever met in my life. You have genuine concern for a person's spiritual well-being and the patience to mentor them where they are at in their walk in Christ. You have and always will help those to understand better our Lord and Savior and to instill a deeper understanding of the scriptures to those who are hungry. Remember you were hand chosen. You are an amazing man!*

Two years later, I sadly resigned from fielding *PeaceWithGod.net* chat inquiries due to 80% of queries being off-topic or needed professional social services (long-term poverty, mental illness, medical woes). Social media does not serve those needs well, if at all.

I regrettably resigned, also in 2017, from serving communion. My hands sometimes have essential tremors and I nearly dropped the tray of juice cups in the lap of my close friend David Stimmel as I tried to hold the tray with just my fingers. The only way to stop the tremor is to let go of the item or else the tremor wildly amplifies.

In response to my resignation, Todd Carnahan:

*I understand your resignation. Thank you for being such a sweet gentle, loving servant of The Lord. Our son really enjoys your [Greek] class and, as parents, we appreciate your willingness to have our young son in your class.*

In 2020, I converted my 1998 talk at LLNL (VHS tape to YouTube) about faith observations during two annual work trips to Moscow. That 21-year-old videotape was on the death track of all old technology (akin to 5" floppy disk drives, which I still have for my Commodore 64). That slideshow talk was better than I recalled it.

Back in 1998, Del Barber gave me her newly authored *Survivors Guide to Grief* pamphlet. In 2020, I edited, expanded, and posted it as an 8-page PDF file.

## Jewish Interests

### 70% Kosher?

Friends ask about my eating kosher. That leads to an alarm at my becoming legalistic or abandoning Jesus as my sole means of forgiveness. Wesleyan theologians would instead recognize it as a spiritual discipline in my lifelong growth in faith.

Jesus settled the issue of sin for whoever takes his open-hand free offer. I further follow God out of a love relationship. It was as if Jesus impressed upon me to do some Biblical behavior purely out of love without rewards or punishments hanging overhead.

I mostly keep my prayers, reading, eating kosher, speaking in gentle tongues, or tithing to myself. I speak of their positives but only God persuades a person of their inner value.

Many foods designate rabbinic inspection (K for Koshered, U for Union of Orthodox Rabbis). They call these rules ‘kashrut’ (how to prepare foods as Torah-observant).

With long lists of unsuitable meats, I asked a Jewish co-worker at LLNL for insight many years ago. His answer was so simple, “*Avoid eating a scavenger*” [or a land-based meat eater]. Humans are thus not food (well, duh!) This simple rule got to the important aspect without tripping over 80% of the minutia.

### Beth Emek Lectures

The local Reform Judaism synagogue planned a trip to Israel in 2013. They offered monthly talks for potential travelers. One or two of us attending were not Jewish. Being circumspect and respectful, I was mistaken as a bearded Rabbi from another city. I quickly admitted not and that the excellent lectures attracted me.

A grandmotherly atheist member (a conflict of terms) took me under her wing. After several lectures, she made it her mission (she told me) to convince me to become a Jew. We became an odd couple as if friends for years. Everyone needs a Jewish grandmother.

Knowledgeable speakers, several from Israel, spoke on topics that would interest an observant Christian audience. They hosted a foreign movie called *My Dad was Baryshnikov* (2011 Russian). I attended the film and the following lectures.

- What archaeology reveals about the Bible
- Judaism in the time of Jesus
- Cave of John the Baptist
- Historical Jerusalem
- Jewish partisans during WWII
- Weapon non-proliferation in Middle East
- History of Tel Aviv
- Israel’s immigrant populations
- Synagogue and State in Israel

## Child-Level Aleph Bet - אב

I failed to master the Hebrew alphabet over a decade ago. It rose again to the top of my bucket list for 2011. I restarted from scratch. I first experienced the alphabet back in 1998 with a Messianic-Jewish mom and her young sabra boys (native-born Israelis). Now, another Messianic-Jewish mom thought it was time for her young daughters to learn. I pretended to be a second grader and the girls accepted me in their weekly exercises of writing lines of letters. Writing was one vital leg of learning, the others being reading (flash cards list drills), and hear/say (ears-only).

At the same time, I joined a weekly class through Brit Ahavah using flash cards with vowel points for new readers (children and tourists). Once I understood the system, my recognition jumped. The text became easier to read phonetically. Missing such a basic concept made the text indecipherable. Some liturgical vocabulary certainly helped.

The reading class used a children's primer, which introduced words along with the letters. By then, I coached the other novices. With an audio CD in the car, I began the "hear/say" of modern Israeli.

It was like initial Spanish: "*Como esta usted? Muy Bien, y tu?*"

In Hebrew: "*Atah Isrealee? Lo, anee Amerikai.*

*Ma schlomkha? Tov meod, todah, v' atah?"*

Of course, that little dialogue will not get me dinner in Israel. Six months later, I restarted the book *Prayerbook Hebrew: The Easy Way* that stumped me years ago. While this Messianic congregation used transliterated Hebrew with the Latin alphabet, I newly recognized some words of the liturgy directly in the Hebrew font.

### **Bri't Ahavah Festivals**

The peripatetic (wandering) Brit Ahavah Messianic congregation needed new rental space. I arranged their move under trivial donation conditions to Trinity Baptist. The Southern Baptist Convention made a concerted effort to encourage such congregations, leading some mistakenly to think that Messianic Congregations were a Southern Baptist ruse. Brit Ahavah rented two rooms at Trinity from 2012 through 2015.

Brit Ahavah only saw me at the high holy days but used me in their web-site redesign.

I co-led presentations of the Passover Seder at Trinity in 2012, one on Maundy Thursday, and one for parents at Vacation Bible School that summer. We did this again sometime in 2017 under our new Pastor, who said he had distant Jewish relatives.

**Spreading Panic among Curators**

In December 2013, I took my third century oil lamp from its small museum case for its first use in nearly two millennia. Since oil lamp technology did not change much, this generic stamped lamp was a close match to its Mediterranean cousins of the first century.

My father-in-law bought it for me decades ago at the excavations at the large Roman army camp in York England. At 1700 years old, it still held olive oil. With a piece of string for a wick, it was a hit for the Hanukkah service at Brit Ahavah.



**Figure 18 - Roman Lamp from York– 12/2013**



## Livermore Heritage Guild

www.lhg.org

The historical society for Livermore (LHG) got started when the city granted permission to the railroad to demolish the long unused Livermore Railroad Depot. Quick action stopped the bulldozer and wrecking crew mid-stride much to the surprise of all parties.

Most people with an interest in local history tend to be retirees and adult grandchildren of the pioneer families of the area. A few youngsters like me became interested.

### Lectures

Occasional lectures drew me into their circle. Topics that I attended included: Carnegie Libraries, Civil War facilities in the Bay Area, Shipbuilding in WWII Bay Area, the Livermore photo book series, and the unveiling of the replacement HistoryMobile in 2013 (a repurposed motorhome as youth museum driven to local elementary schools).

My first edition (2012) of my father-in-law's memoir chapter **California State Guard** described 1941 with my intention of presenting it as a talk. In 2013, Jeff Kaskey, then Guild president, graciously marked up that draft in red ink. I presented the overhauled revision for their history lecture series in 4/2013 wearing the State Guard uniform from WWII (lacking the shoulder patch and Jack's insignia).



Figure 19 - Rittenhouse WWII Lecture (LHG 4/2013)

PAGE 8 - The Independent, APRIL 11, 2013

## SHORT NOTE

### History Lecture

The Livermore Heritage Guild's history lecture will feature guest speaker Harry Briley.

He will tell the World War II story of Jack Rittenhouse, who signed up for the California State Guard in 1941: "The Invasions That Never Were." State guards were established across the country to patrol for foreign military invasions.

The lecture will be presented on Wed., April 17 at the Livermore Library, 1188 So. Livermore Ave.



### Hand-Operated Devices

At the Benicia history museum in 2013, I salivated over an 1890's non-working brass cash register. This prompted me to repair old equipment for our local mini-museum.

This spark of enthusiasm made three antique sturdy machines operate safely for children:

- 1920's Dalton Adder
- 1923 Sandstrund Adder/Subtractor
- 1885 Wilcox&Gibbs Treadle Chain Stitch Sewing Machine

I removed the sewing needle to prevent accidental punctures. After a few weeks of annoying squeaks, the long unused sewing machine ran silently as if new. Most visiting children seemed captivated by the mechanical response of calculators built before their grandparents were born. Push a button, pull a lever, and it prints a number. The youthful visitors go through a roll of adding machine paper every month.

1920's Dalton



1923 Sandstrund



1885 Wilcox&Gibbs



Figure 20 - Antique Machine Repairs - 2013

Both an electrified 1950s mechanical cash register and an electric-assisted 1937 Marchant Calculator was less cooperative. While I made some headway with frozen gears, neither could allow visitor use without damaging the internal mechanics. The NCR cash register still beckons another attempt at freeing up the jammed mechanism.

**Local Tourist - 2013**

The national anniversary of the Lincoln Highway occurred in 2013. The nation's first coast-to-coast highway ran through Livermore and terminated at the White House in Washington DC. Antique cars drove east through Livermore to the Duarte Garage managed by the Guild. They met up with a similar caravan heading west in 6/2013.

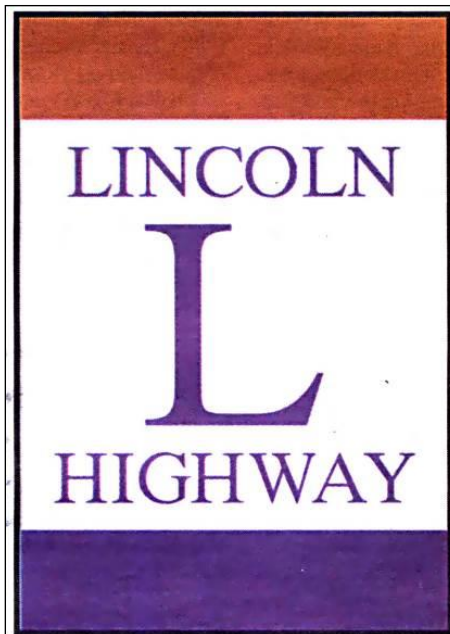


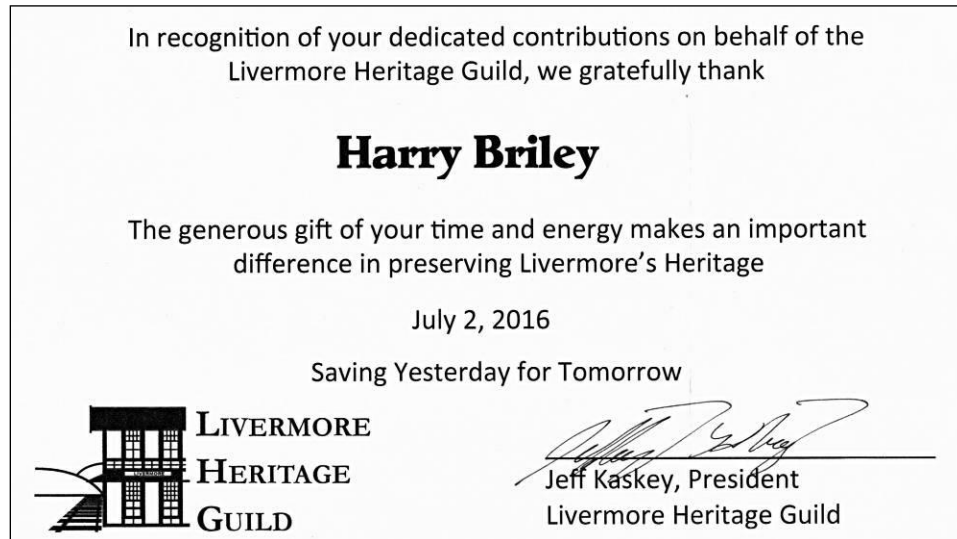
Figure 21 – Lincoln Highway, 6/2013 - Livermore Airport, 10/2013

After a long absence, I attended the 10/2013 Livermore Airport open house. The President's sequester halted military providing flights to such annual presentations. Therefore, amazing homebuilt and experimental aviation clubs owned the show.

## Walk With Me – A New Song

In 8/2016, the Guild voted me in as Collections Manager, which entailed crawling under tables for computer cables and cockroach traps.

My indexing efforts of historic photos ran into a hiccup with a real librarian doing the very same job all year using different criteria. She meticulously crosschecked by hand our independent efforts against the text on the backs of each physical photo.



As Collections Manager, my key task was asking questions and listening to volunteers who owned the information. We manage three city-owned historic sites for Livermore (1911 Carnegie Library, a 1915 auto repair shop on the national Lincoln Highway, and an 1870-1920's horse ranch farmstead).

I helped plan but not do an intensive photo-scanning project. Like my LLNL supervisor role, I worked mostly to reach consensus about the processes and to remove roadblocks from the volunteers. Five people with a passion for different tasks do a much better job than if I tackled those tasks on my own.

I wrote a monograph in 2018 about six Family Bibles (1831 to 1930) with help from one of the donors and two genealogical experts. It lets the public see the more interesting fragile pages without handling. It describes histories of such century-old Bibles, shows artwork, and the local pioneer family histories.

See: <https://brileyh.weebly.com/historical-monographs.html>

We volunteers (from the Guild and community groups) clean up and restore the Hagemann Horse Ranch (1870-1920) down the street from my home. It is an outdoor museum, which the city owns. The Guild hosts monthly events with different themes.




Walk With Me – A New Song



Figure 22 - Chicken Coop Funding Event (R. Finn 6/2018)

In a weak moment, I offered to be President and the Guild voted me a two-year term in 9/2018 (ending in 10/2020). I could not match the outgoing 10-year expert, but he much wanted to hand off the reins to a willing victim.



**Livermore Heritage Guild**  
*Saving Yesterday for Tomorrow*

**Harry Briley**  
*President*

---

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Visit us in the old Carnegie Library, 2155 Third St.  
[www.livermorehistory.com](http://www.livermorehistory.com)



Figure 23 – 2018 Officers of the Guild (R. Finn 12/2018)  
[... with one of three Guild-restored fire engines]

## Walk With Me – A New Song

The Guild hosted a 2019 summer school group on Hagemann Ranch showing children-oriented ranch chores. My station was the bucksaw. The children showed much enthusiasm to saw through a five-inch tree limb once they learned the technique.



Figure 24 - Ranch Chores Event (B. Soules, 7/2019)

### Computer Network

I retrofitted our two unsupported web sites into a uniform structure and single-site design. I enjoyed using raw HTML5 coding after a long hiatus. Some site aspects sent me scurrying back to my old HTML pocket guides.

I led a team of four volunteers in 2017 to rip out eyesore 1960's phone runs, run new hidden phone lines, and drilled holes between the floors for a revised computer network. Each person had a specialty that made it impossible for any of us alone from doing this.

Another retiree and I upgraded the Guild computer network in 2019 to Windows10, a central server with cloud backups, extra memory for the 64-bit systems, Gigabit routers, and a cellular modem eight times faster than our abysmal DSL landline. We wanted high-speed cable or at least fiber-optic, but neither vendor could justify the cost to run such a line into the city park to the isolated Carnegie Library Building (a technology-free island until my co-worker found reliable cellular Internet).

All during 2020, I gave technical support for the Guild with a major rebuild of web site for cell phones (that is, responsive page behavior) and keeping the computers updated.

### **Road Trip Museums**

Besides visits to history museums on the road, I joined the Mare Island Naval Shipyard museum in 2016. I helped their librarian discover how their software created topical web pages (e.g. submarines). They wanted a book list page for an anniversary of a ship.

During 2017, I visited small museums comparing them with the Guild. Indeed, once known, the officers at each museum spoke openly about their projects and small museum woes that we all experience. Each Carnegie Library building in California often had a common exterior but various floorplans. No two were alike although the exterior in Lompoc closely matched ours in Livermore.

The Guild stays busy keeping the three sites open to the public but our overall valley needs a few wealthy patrons to fund an area-wide formal museum.

Each nearby historical group has a piece of the whole and manages historic structures for their host city, but none has a truly suitable joint area museum. We each have storage rooms of historical materials but no practical way to lay out the materials for semi-permanent thematic displays. I have in mind the excellent Haggin Museum in Stockton started in 1928 and the San Joaquin County Historical Museum buildings in 1966 in Lodi, both of which fledgling local historical societies started.



## Other Activities

### Bicycle Commute Changes

For my 30-year award from LLNL, I chose a 15-speed mountain bike instead of getting a wristwatch or a clock. Given a short adult frame, I used a thin-wall 15" post to get enough seat height, which finally bent in half after 2500 miles of commuting for three years. My top sprints were 23mph.

I added a sound system in 2011 to my bicycle basket for my daily commute. However, the mini-speakers could not overcome traffic noise and the “shock-resistant” MP3 hard-drive player could not handle road vibrations. Therefore, I purchased a solid-state MP3 player plugged into a self-amplified clamshell speaker. The MP3 player fit inside the clamshell and sat on my lunch bag in the basket. It was legal with nothing in my ears, and mostly did the job except during the noisy commute traffic on East Avenue.

I purchased an old heavy 10-speed Centurion bike on consignment: 27" tires with a tall frame. I barely straddled it, which explained why it sat unsold. It was the first bicycle for my size after 50 years. I still added my BMX handlebars to get handles at a suitable height. I customized it using add-on attachments from the mountain bike.

I reassembled the mountain bike to its original form for Alexis (she was elated), but it was stolen while locked outside to their apartment staircase (she was crushed).

### Staying Fit in 2014

Carbs and I are best friends but to fight it in 2014, I cycled through the Holdener Park hills and Sycamore Grove Wilderness Park south of Livermore. On my first outing, I broke my derailleur gear downshifting up a small slope, but the long walk home did not derail my cycling. My daughter Karen suggested I get a towing service for my bicycle.



Figure 25 - Holdener Park - Sunol Wilderness - 2014



## Walk With Me – A New Song

An emergency medical need in 4/2011 came from an unexplained severe lumbar strain. “*I am too young to be this old,*” said I wistfully in 2013 at age 60 speaking of my bucket list. My athletic daughter Karen requested that I not kick that bucket any time soon.

Over 35 years passed before I hiked an easy path in the nearby Sunol wilderness park with the Men’s church group in 2014. Wilderness only means a tract of scrub hills seemingly miles from the surrounding cities. The park leased these nearby watersheds or hidden steep sections of electric utility properties for hiking access.

My daughter challenged me to a 17-mile hike up Half Dome at Yosemite for 9/2014. We each packed for it but the Meadow Fire closed the trails during our reserved week and helicopters rescued trapped hikers. The cancellation was for the best as only a half-day was my limit outdoors for the Creeks Clean-up Saturday occurring that same month.

### **Sort of Fit in 2015**

After my camping road-trip to Salem, Oregon in 2015, I hiked from the end of Sycamore Park on the newly opened extension trail that wound past Camp Arroyo. As the trail approached the Del Valle dam, the path became steeply uphill to the peak.



**Figure 26 - Del Valle Trail, Livermore in background - 9/2015**

At the peak, high winds howled and forced me to take off my hat. The lakeside of the hills lilted with lovely birdsongs in trees halfway downslope. The path was far too steep for bicycles, but signs let cyclists use them! I reached the lake edge after a two-hour hike up and over peak. The water was warm. I should have taken swim trunks. I wrapped a heel blister with a handkerchief for the return hike (My heel bone spur hates boots).

I met a USGS Crew at the close of the 3.5-hour hike. They calculated the water flow in Sycamore Park using a cross-section of the arroyo and speed sensors. Geek City! They were thrilled to talk technical about their equipment.

## Walk With Me – A New Song

### Davies Symphony Hall

After hauling a cello for my friend Hildi Kang in 2014, she convinced me to sign up for the three-hour strings workshop in 5/2015. I can legitimately say that I performed in concert on stage at the famous Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco.



Figure 27 - Musicians Entrance (D. Weber 5/2015)

A new set of attached mini-wheels simplified bass transport on the sidewalks. I added the red stripe on my bass cover since the neck sticks out of my car back seat window. However, Hildi's friend drove us with our large instruments in a more suitable van.



Figure 28 - Mark Wright leads Sectional (I. Lapalme 5/2015)



## Walk With Me – A New Song

Symphony conductor Michael Tilson Thomas put in a rare appearance. Initially just a short visit, he engaged each sectional, coached us basses through a tricky measure, and stayed for the concert. His visit caused a celebrity-stir among old hands. Mark Wright, our bass mentor, said, “*You pay attention when your boss shows up!*”

I played my 1961 King Mortone. Mark’s dark colored bass from the 1700’s gave an effortless deep resonate tone. It surprised me that professionals replaced their strings every four months. I re-learned that sticky rosin was best and dry rosin dust squeaks.

### Side Yard Trellis

During the government shutdown (President’s sequestration) in 2013, I snagged a journeyman carpenter from LLNL to replace my decrepit side-yard shade arbor and disintegrating gate. We created a design that fit within city requirements. The result made the narrow side yard into a usable pathway of round stepping-stones and shaded the western wall that even in winter can cook an egg when unshaded. I whacked back the former vines severely from the prior arbor and wondered if that shock killed them.

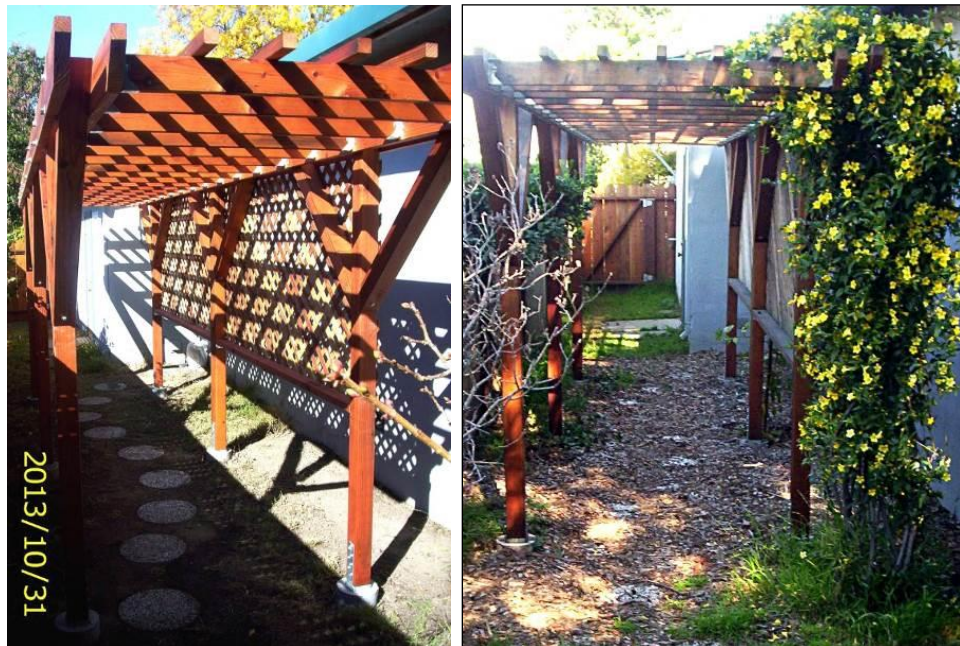


Figure 29 - West side arbor - 10/2013 and 2/2015

After months of winter rains, tentative vine buds appeared on the dead bark. In the following summer, I spread a thick layer of wood-bark mulch and planted another vine. Altogether, the recovered Caroline Jessamine, the two recovered Honey Suckle vines, and the new Passion Fruit vine created an aromatic and green shady tunnel.

My solar inverter died after seven years. During the tear-out of the old arbor, I installed a replacement inverter myself for half the original cost with better technology. I love solar and thus disliked briefly paying the former high electric bills when my inverter died.

**Bumblebees!**

In 2016, I chopped up a rotted trunk of a shade bush and huge bumblebees flew out of the exposed bored tunnels in the root ball. These lumbering cargo carriers of the genre ought not to fly at all given their body mass to wing ratio. I put myself at a short distance while they cumbrously gained altitude and flew off confused by my awakening them.

I had wet rot in some thick planks consisting of my roof and eaves (no attic in my home). Probing the damage, I stumbled on yet another nest of these wood boring bumblebees. Their progress put them within an inch of entering my bedroom.

My roofer replaced seven planks. I had them install a 2x2 Velux skylight over the formerly dark master bathroom. The skylight made the overall project more palatable beyond just a plain roof repair. Why did I wait 35 years to install this awesome window?



**Figure 30 - Skylight did wonders to Master Bath - 2016**

**Allstate Audit**

Allstate Insurance after 35 years decided to audit homes on our street in 7/2016 to verify that we keep these older 1959-era homes safe and maintained.

I willingly completed the four tasks: scrape and repaint the eaves (badly needed), install or replace gutter downspouts (I negotiated to replace with more attractive rain chains), chainsaw back all shade tree limbs overhanging the roof (sigh!), and grind down and fill the uplifted cracks in the driveway (trip hazard). Sometimes, we just need a kick in the pants to schedule home maintenance.

### Livermore City Services

The city Water Resources attached me to an arroyo adopted by the Henry family semi-annually. Livermore Mayor John Marchand appreciated our joint efforts in 4/2015.



Figure 31 –Creeks (J. Henry 9/2015, City Livermore 4/2015)

Livermore Water Resources Coordinator Lynna Allen, 12/11/2015:

*The past few years you made a difference in the [“Adopt a Creek” Program at risk of termination in 12/2014]. Your letter [to the Regional Water Quality Control Board] and photos solely convinced [City Public Works] Darren Greenwood to support the Program. You are truly amazing person and community leader. Thank you for blessing us with your positivity, great ideas and hard work. You are respected and admired by all who get the pleasure of working with you. You deserve this honor, recognition, and more!*

I helped a city team to paint over the worst spots of graffiti in town and then spot-cleaned graffiti near my home. Leaders of our city Neighborhood Watch program poked at me to attend the Citizens Police Academy #28 (a 72-hour class) to learn police workings. The hands-on sessions included firearms, mock arrests, and a night ride along with on patrol.



Figure 32 - Citizens Police Academy #28 (City Livermore 11/2015)



## Resurrected Game Software

### My Chess Program

I stumbled upon the 1981 ‘final’ version of my Chess program in FORTRAN in 2014. I originally wrote this in 1973 for my Combinatorics Math Analysis class. I stored the green-bar paper printout in a non-descript box hidden from my view for decades.

As a lark, I scanned in those 37 pages to darken the faded gray print enough to OCR convert most of program lines. The result taxed my proofreading. The scanner treated three sets of vitally different characters as equivalent: (O,0,C), (B,8), and (I,1,1). Ugh!

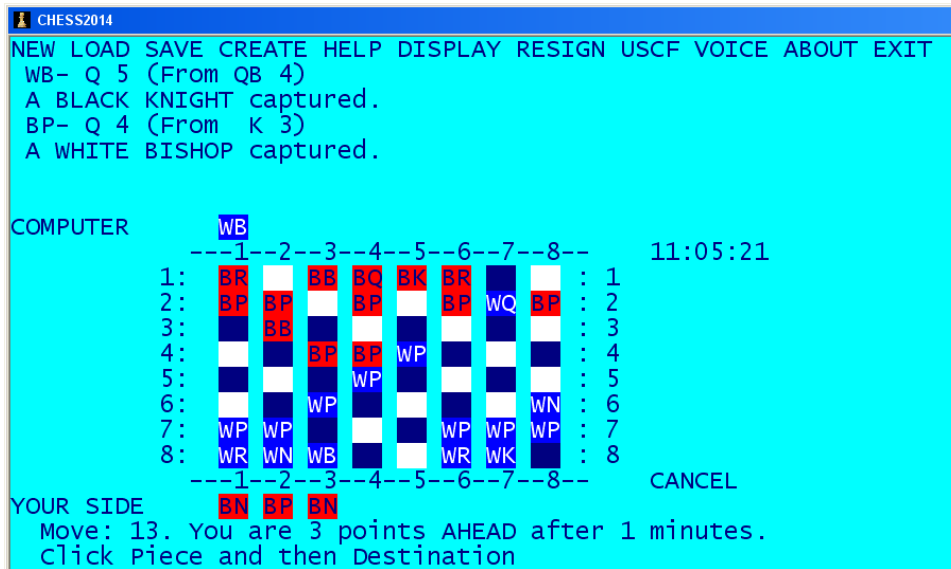


Figure 33 - Chess2014 Screenshot – 2014

I slowly converted that text into compiled BASIC for Windows and added sound/mouse controls and color. These common features were unavailable during green-screen 1981.

After forty years, it plays a reasonable tactical game that novices can beat in 35 to 50 moves. It does not cheat with a database but examines each move as a human would.

### Return of Zork

I discovered free “abandoned-ware” in 2015 for 35-year-old Infocom text adventures, which run on Windows with a simple edit in their BAT files. There are no graphics.

Students played Zork’s predecessor *Colossal Cave* in 1975 on our college IBM 360/44 mainframe using the single console typewriter. The Internet and desktops did not exist.

We huddled around that clackity-clack pin-fed green-bar paper at night to navigate twisty caves. Infocom commercialized the genre in 1981 and freely posted the series in 1991.

### Commodore 64

In 2020, two Commodore aficionados (David Youd and David Knapp, both known from LLNL) welcomed my entire collection of purchased software, many books, and a few odd components from forty years ago. Members in their on-line retro Commodore community have already put these ancient C64 items to use.

Instead going to landfill, children from the 1980s now repair old C64 hardware. They copy old 8-bit diskettes to an archival format that let a modern Windows PC run games using a C64 emulator. It is like the DOSBox tool for running early 16-bit PC software under Windows 10. David Youd hopes to load the novice Briley Software products from 1980 into that public archive. I cautioned them that the software was rudimentary back in 1979 due to the 8000-character memory PETs. Computer-historian buffs actively save those 40-year-old early products before they are lost forever. I was astounded.

See: [archive.org](https://archive.org) and [c64.com](https://c64.com)

With their encouragement, I next shipped a fully tested C64 to my son James and his four children. It included two dozen tested cartridge games given to me decades ago by my brother-in-law Dennis Blair. My rare C64 video cable with RCA jacks enabled James to use a large flat-TV as the monitor. Those old C64 games never looked so good!



Figure 34 - Redeployed C64 with flat screen (J.Briley 8/2020)



## California Republicans

### California Republican Assembly

The 2017 convention for the California Republican Assembly occurred in Fresno as my first time. They are feisty independent conservatives vetting candidates (66% required for endorsement) and who despise candidates who game the system for endorsements.

I found them an amazingly diverse melting pot but morally on the same page. I sat with a slightly older Jewish man (regional director), a young Chinese man born in Hong Kong (SoCal politician), a Filipino man, and two African-American men (Los Angeles delegates). I had the wrong media-created image of a bunch of aging white angry men. Yes, the attendance biased towards retirees but not by much, clearly not a white enclave, civil even during the hotly contested resolutions, and women outnumbered men (except on my huddled multi-ethnic row).

My Jewish elder and I happily connected. I worked at a Jewish summer camp in Malibu run by Wilshire Blvd Temple in Los Angeles. He knew both places growing up in Malibu. I went off to college and he went off to Vietnam. When we pledged allegiance to the flag, he saluted as a veteran. Overt Jesus followers outnumbered Jewish attendees but this man gave the initial convention prayer with an opening line in Hebrew (in which I knew most of the words).

I did not have time to jump in with both feet but I was impressed enough to encourage Republican Women in the Tri-Valley. My Jewish seatmate left me with a firm handshake and these parting words, "Welcome home".

Banter talked humorously of splitting California East and West during our meals (if the coast did not first slide into the ocean upon the next earthquake). However, a sober resolution rejected any secession plan. Given our military bases and ports, the Feds would never let California slip away easily. Even so, the CRA formally opposed such a secession even though they have no love lost for intrusive federal government.

In 2019, I attended my second convention of the California Republican Assembly. I still had no vote as a member-at-large (since Alameda County has no CRA chapter).

### **Alameda County**

My county has 50% registered as Democrats and 20% as liberal Independents. Together, they vote regularly 70% for budget insolvency. Even liberal former Governor Brown said that we must not continue voting for debt. Interest payments eat up taxes, forcing more taxes until our goose is cooked.

The Top-Two Open Primary for California has made our General Election into a mere run-off between liberals. This eliminated the original purpose of the Primary where each party could sift through their own candidates. To win, all viable candidates must campaign as liberals. Republicans promoted this idea and Democrats gladly accepted.

I helped the Tri-Valley Republican speaker's club as their webmaster since 2017. This let me hear conservative candidates in person without media filters.

See: [www.trivalleyrepublican.org](http://www.trivalleyrepublican.org)

After sitting on the political sidelines for decades, I took out papers in late 2019 at the Alameda County offices in Oakland to run for the Republican Central Committee, 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly District. Only registered Republicans in my Tri-Valley area could vote for this office. I won that open 2021 seat in the 3/2020 Primary with just 4550 votes, just under 10% of the votes cast. I was surprised to win first time out. I felt like the barking dog chasing a squirrel and having caught it, not quite knowing what to make of it. They seated me early in a vacated district seat in May instead of waiting until January.

In 10/2020, I “walked precincts” in neighborhoods near me for the first time, which seemed outside my introverted comfort. However, the 2020 quarantine meant I needed only to leave an election card under doormats and not knock on doors. Even so, most who caught me in person felt positive. Three separate homeowners wanted to hug me!

## Road Trips

### New Mexico 2011

LLNL travel for the ESN project took me to Sandia National Lab in Albuquerque. With added vacation days, I visited the Rio Grande Botanical Gardens, Aquarium, and the Albuquerque Historical Museum with an exhibit on Tiffany Art stained glass.

During that work trip, I wove in a do-it-yourself weekend faith retreat. I heard the common text from the early chapters of the letter to the Romans, even though each church venue used a different reading cycle (Messianic, Catholic, Liturgical Protestant).

- Thursday night - Dinner with college friends Pastor David and Sheli Snyman – We discussed spiritual disciplines started in college retained all these decades.
- Saturday Morning - Adat Y'Shua Messianic Congregation - Stood during the Amidah Prayer and said the Kiddush with congregation in memory of Anne.
- Saturday Evening Mass - Catholic Church in Old Town – This tourist destination served a faithful congregation and the worship time was not lackadaisical.
- Sunday morning- Paradise Hills UMC - I attended the contemporary music worship service led by then Pastor David Snyman.
- Sunday evening after flight home – I visited Anne's grave

In July, four of us Trinity teachers attended the Glorieta Baptist Conference Center in the forest east of Santa Fe. It was untouched by the large forest fires to the west. After many elective seminars, some of us toured the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis in Santa Fe. The immersion baptismal installed in 2001 in the center of that building impressed me.



Figure 35 – Forest of Glorieta Conference Center - 7/2011

**Fort Ross, California 7/2011**

I visited the annual Fort Ross cultural heritage day with Karen and grandkids. The centennial event was the following July, so this year felt like a dress rehearsal.

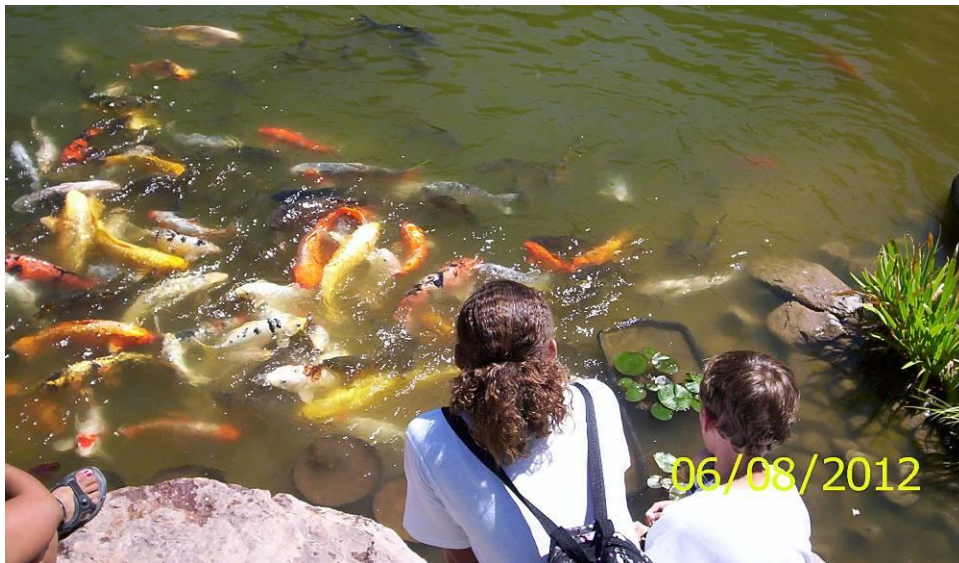


**Figure 36 - Path and Grinding Stone, Fort Ross (K. Briley 7/2011)**

The large Russian representation and children of the role players wore period costumes. My favorite part was two young girls, age five in costume playing some chase games and talking in high speed Russian. I felt transported into fort life of the 1830's.

**Route 66 Road Trip 6/2012**

The grandkids, 9 and 12, were perfect ages to drive 2800 miles on a 12-day road trip in 6/2012 for my mother-in-law's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Since both kids watched the Pixar movie *Cars*, we made side trips to Radiator Springs (Seligman) and the Safety Cone Motel (Holbrook). In Albuquerque, we visited the Botanical Gardens, its model outdoor trains, and well-appointed Aquarium. The kids most enjoyed the butterfly pavilion and koi pond. We toured the Albuquerque Historical Museum and many Old Town gift shops.



**Figure 37 - Alexis and Aidan, Botanical Gardens - 6/2012**



## Walk With Me – A New Song

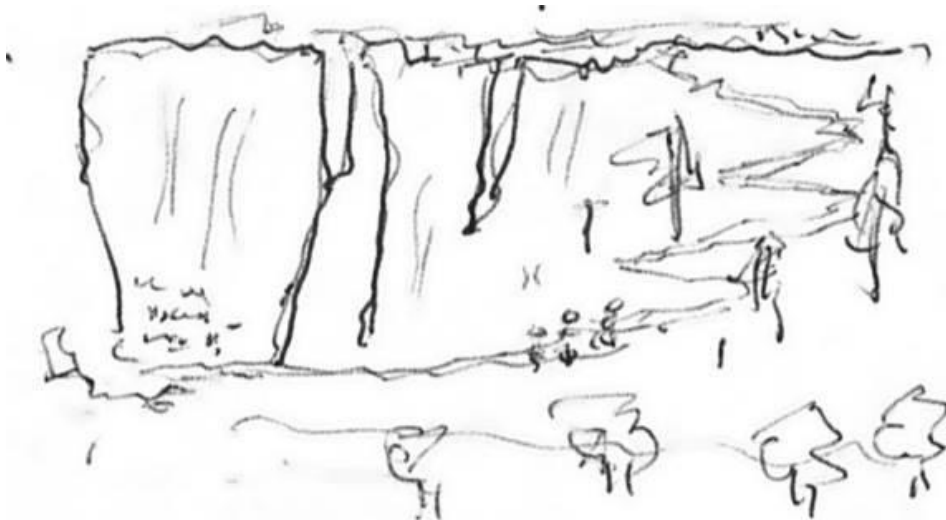
On Saturday, I made a repeat visit to the Messianic congregation of Adat Y'shua, and then visited the National Atomic Museum with its many hands-on displays.



**Figure 38 - Alexis and Aidan, National Atomic Museum - 6/2012**

On Sunday, we visited college friends, Pastor David and Sheli Snyman, at Paradise Hills United Methodist Church in route to the Petroglyphs National Monument. I sketched some glyphs seen on that two-mile sand path into a well-hidden section of the park.

Their favorite part was getting lost in the National Forest near the Salinas National Monument. (If your GPS proposes a road prefixed by NF, turn around!) When the one-way fire-road became a sandy field with tire tracks in three different directions, we discovered that prayer was not academic. There was no panic, but the kids said an affirming loud “*Amen*”. The GPS said we strayed from the main “road” twice, but after each prayer, we got back onto the supposed “road”. This backcountry trek took us to men with chainsaws cutting deadwood, a creek crossing on loose shale where we arranged rocks for the tires, and a herd of cows with their calves asleep in the “road”.

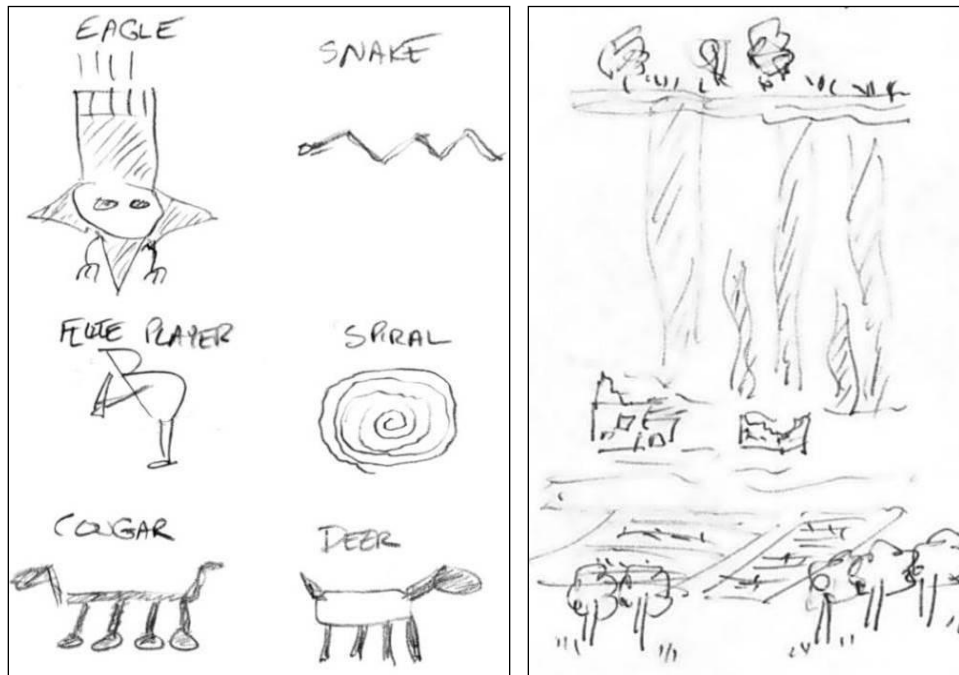


**Figure 39 – Switch-back path up El Morro (H. Briley 6/2012)**

## Walk With Me – A New Song

On our drive home, we hiked up the El Morro National Monument switchbacks to the mesa top. This off-track treasure displayed carved signatures back to Onate in the 1500's and ended with railroad crews in the late 1800's. The top plateau afforded 360-degree views for miles and hid away a small pueblo ruin in good condition.

The kids other top favorite was rock hopping at Sliding Rock Ruins overlook at Canyon de Chelly next to 700 foot drop-offs without railings. The pre-teens seemed to learn by raw physicality and I hope that they connect the region's amazing historicity later in life.



**Figure 40 – Petroglyphs, Albuquerque - Antelope Ruins, Chinle' (H. Briley 6/2012)**

My sketch of Antelope Ruins, Canyon de Chelly, shows modern farm plots. The dark columns are iron ore stains on the cliff face from mesa water run-off 500 feet above.

The grandkids kept trip journals and my quick pencil sketches were idea starters for them. Below, one of them hopped along a chain of logs at the Petrified National Forest.



**Figure 41 - Logs at Petrified National Forest (H. Briley 6/2012)**

We closed our trip at the Kern County Museum in California with many historical buildings moved onto the site and filled with museum artifacts as if the owners had just walked out. They most enjoyed the hands-on exhibits about the oil industry.

**Middle Michigan 8/2012**

My unknown half-Aunt contacted me on Facebook in 2010. Suspicious, I only became convinced after she mentioned my well-hidden nickname. She re-introduced my first cousins. After two years of matching family data with each of them, I flew to Alpena, Michigan with a broken toe for a week in 8/2012. My Aunt needed surgeries that month and so I missed meeting my closest primary source about my enigmatic father.

Flying on a half-empty shuttle to rural Alpena, I was the last customer for a rental car. The clerk locked up the terminal and bid me a good night as he drove off. We three first cousins, one each from three brothers, not looking at all alike, met for the first time in the now abandoned moonless parking lot. It felt like the setting from a spy novel.

After conferring briefly over the immediate schedule, I set off trailing Patti down a dark stretch of paved county road, deep into a forested area. She pulled off onto an unmarked gravel trail, into a ravine, barely wide enough for the cars with thick groves of white ash saplings on either side reflecting my headlights. A couple of times, her car disappeared around a curve. Cue the scary music as my welcome to Thunder Bay River in Michigan.



**Figure 42 – Thunder Bay River, Alpena (P. Briley 8/2012)**

Patti and Larry introduced me to third-cousins east of Atlanta where my father grew up, further inland from Lake Huron. I sought source material and significant photos.

Unknowingly, my visit became a catalyst for the extended family living within a 40-mile radius. They never earlier checked their joint history. Each would demur saying they only knew about thus and so, while offering some obscure fact. My Aunt gave me an overall outline in which such small facts quickly became keys that explained the gaps or unlocked wholly new swatches of material for all of us first and third cousins.



## Walk With Me – A New Song

I wrote two monograph booklets. When visiting Clinton Briley’s dairy farm, we asked about the site of the 1878 family log cabin. Standing in his rubber muck boots, trying to judge what this strange Californian wanted, he nodded back up the farm driveway.

*“It’s up there.”*

*“Where?!”*, Patti and I asked swiveling to stare blankly at a 1920’s farmhouse.

*“I’ll show you.”* as he gave us a tour of the disassembled interior of the house.

Workers earlier removed the interior plaster/ lathe exposing the original cabin walls. Patti and I photographed the basement and both floors. We found newspaper remnants glued to ceiling beams that confirmed the date. Clinton introduced his sister who lived there at age 12. She corrected my monograph first edition and added some background.



**Figure 43 - Briley Road – Big Rock Church - Patti Briley, Alpena – 8/2012**

His brother up the road stored family archival material. Barton and Stacy Jo greeted us with yet a third neighboring brother, Victor and Wendy. Stacy Jo brought out the family history with some pages that I collected already. Some inherited boxes were in the attic.

Almost as a curiosity, they brought out the 1876 Family Bible sealed around 1955 in a Plexiglas case. None of the three brothers knew it existed. Barton unscrewed the case and let me first handle it after 60 years. Patti and I double photographed vital pages.

I enhanced our best joint photos into a 22-page monograph describing the Bible (more like a mini-library with reference books), the transcription of its family history, and detective work to identify the 1870’s photographs mounted in the back of the Bible.

## Walk With Me – A New Song

I toured a private renovation of a schoolhouse in the farm hamlet of Rust via a bother of Marsha, owner of an ice cream diner in Hillman who went to high school with Patti. Larry's mother was a side branch in Marsha's family. Marsha was the cousin of the wife of a LLNL co-worker down my hall back in Livermore. Thus, the local insider jokes about background checks: *"Oh, you are a third cousin; it's OK to go on a date!"*

On Sunday, we attended the historic church in Big Rock the cousins found mid-way between their towns. None knew that it held a 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary outdoor banquet with former pastors flown in for the occasion. We ate well and the cousins reconnected with regional friends. During the poster session of exhibits, I met local AWANA leaders.

In Alpena, I borrowed a bicycle from Larry's brother to tour the bike path of about 16 miles connecting beach parks and an island in a wildlife preserve lake.

The trip far exceeded my expectations. I visited three cemeteries, visited a well-hidden State beach preserve, took a glass-bottom shipwreck tour, toured the Besser Museum of local history, and attended the 8/2012 "Wings over Alpena" air show at the local USAF training facility (Patti won bleacher tickets for us in a radio contest).

### **Northern California 7/2013**

In a test run for a summer road trip, I drove Karen and the grandkids to Gilroy in June to San Juan Bautista (John the Baptist) State History Park for their "Early Days" gathering.



**Figure 44 – Karen and Aidan, San Juan Bautista – 6/2013**

For the 12-day road trip in July, we circled up the North California coast, peaked (literally) at Garfield Peak on the south rim of Crater Lake, and came down the Sierra Mountains to Lake Tahoe (my first time), panned for gold in Coloma, and back home. We stopped at each National and State Park, and their attached museums.

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Our northern stops included the Benicia State Capitol, the Sonoma Bear-Revolt Barracks and Home of Mexican General Vallejo, the barking sands of Jug Handle Beach in Fort Bragg (a favorite of the kids), and the Mendocino Botanical Gardens. We visited several historic sites in Eureka and drove to Oregon Caves (my third visit).



**Figure 45 - Benicia State Capitol and Sonoma Barracks - 7/2013**

The grandkids, being tweens, tolerated the historical parts minimally and absorbed things more thoroughly by doing, tasting, touching, smelling, hearing, and chasing assorted critters (like sand crabs and awesome transparent shrimp at Samoa Dunes).

After Crater Lake, we drove southeast to Fort Klamath for the historical background on the Modoc War with their “Captain Jack” which played such a major part of the Lava Beds National Monument. We almost gave up caving in the Lava Beds with our poor flashlights and bumps to the head. Much to our delight, the Park loaned high-beam lanterns and sold low-cost safety helmets. Thus, we took in several of the easier caves.

On our way south, the kids and I anxiously took separate trails at the ice-cold McArthur-Burney Falls. We found each other hours later and swam in the nearby lake. Our favorite spot at Mount Lassen was “polar-bear” soaking in a frigid snowmelt lake nearest to the Bumpus Hell mud pots and its Sulphur-dioxide (rotten egg smell) fumaroles.

I kept most all activities unannounced and optional when a given day got too raggedy. Two aces were surprise horse rides with permits from Karen. Neither had ridden. My last saddled animal was a burro at age 8. Their eyes widened in sudden brief fear as we saddled up. Our basic riding course for an hour used a soft sandy beach north of Fort Bragg with the guide all to ourselves. She superbly handed all three of us novices.

We ramped up things with a two-hour mountain ride in Graegle almost entirely on loose granite rocks with several steep ascents and descents. We passed along three lakes on the trail with a guide and two other riders. Still for novices, the earlier beach ride prepared us enough to focus on navigating unstable rocks and less on riding mechanics.





Figure 46 – Graeagle Horses and Cave at Lava Beds Natl. Mon. – 7/2013

We spent our first time at Lake Tahoe on the southern shore. The paddle wheel steamer cruise across Lake Tahoe to Emerald Bay left the kids moping about forlornly at being trapped with “nothing to do”. Relaxation was not in their vocabulary. They liked rented bikes for the forested bikeway. I toured the historic Pope-Baldwin mansion grounds while the kids thoroughly enjoyed finding olden nails at a pier site at the lake edge.

We visited a church each Sunday, but neither child appreciated what occurred. Difficulty in locating the churches raised their resistance. In one service, my glasses snapped in half at the bridge. It was as if everything worked against any positive experience with faith. It discouraged me since this is my favorite part of road trips.

As with the 2011 trip, Karen set up the kids for writing a daily journal with a drawing of one thing that we most recalled the prior day. Our goal that year was for each of us to speed-draw an image within 30 minutes after breakfast with color pencils.

### **Fresno, California 10/2013**

I attended the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg as held in Fresno in 10/2013. Many felt it was a poor turnout, but I was giddy as a schoolboy at my first event.

The soldier’s dinner event requested period attire and so I dressed as a Union Chaplain, buying a period shirt, cap, and buckle. I fooled tourists enough to take photos with me.

However, my attempted impression was not passable. Their term for “not quite right” for novices was FARB (“*Far be it from me to criticize your impression*”). I was wearing a brown belt (Confederate side!), period dull-white shirt but no vest, soldiers-color pants (not wool), soldier’s dull-white wool socks, dull black shoes, officer’s color jacket with

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brass buttons (wool, but modern cut), and an officer's cap (no insignia, as appropriate for Chaplain and not the floppy forager's cap for soldiers). At a visual distance, the outfit drew positive attention but it caused pained expressions by veteran re-enactors during face-to-face conversations. One asked why I wore an officer's coat in soldier attire.

Early in the hot daytime, I walked proudly around in my period shirt, leaving my jacket, cap, and belt for the evening dinner. One gentle re-enactor asked was I was walking around in my underwear. A man of that era never left home without his vest, coat buttoned at the top, and hat. People should only see the shirt collar and cuffs. The event drove me to scour thrift shops for immediate improvements. Despite my FARB dressage, these gracious history buffs made for a glorious weekend.



**Figure 47 - Civil War Battle and the FARB, Fresno – 10/2013**

Union Chaplains wore all black with a Navy Blue officer-style coat with black buttons. I added black pants with black suspenders, a black wool knee-length greatcoat (superb for winter), black wool socks, and a proper wide black leather pistol belt (hand sewn to my Union buckle). The costs of a formal Chaplain's coat and vest were daunting. In 2014, I repurposed my wool Navy Blue blazer into a Chaplain's Coat with a hot iron. I added four more buttonholes up to the neck and sewed on black buttons instead of officer brass.

The rules for visiting impressions at historical re-enactment events demand 100% period correct cloth and construction, not at my 80%. However, the revised outfit looked visually accurate as a future party crasher. I wore it at fall festivals at Trinity Church.

I inquired about joining clubs as a Chaplain, but the clubs all wanted Privates in sky blue soldier uniforms with frequent available weekends. Based upon such time demands, I did not pursue re-enactor events any further. It would take the place of church.



### Southern California 11/2013

An unplanned trip to Newport Beach in 11/2013 with LLNL co-workers (Bob Sherwood and Steve Wampler) provided an in-person reunion with Ron Palmer from my high school for a photo-shoot. I spent the sixth grade as a “beach kid”. I felt like a big little kid showing off my homeroom project. It refreshed my memories of that school year.



Figure 48 – Ron Palmer, Newport Beach (L: R. Sherwood, R: R. Palmer 11/2013)

The road trip continued with Bob Sherwood for a first-time visit to Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa, one of the flashpoints of the Jesus People Revolution, and a visit to the eye-opening Spy Exhibit at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley.

In 2014, I first wrote about my multi-church spiritual community at New Mexico Tech. Robert Kirby visited in the summer with more insights. We both experienced professors who encouraged our faith and who still held our feet to the fire for academic standards.



Figure 49 – Robert Kirby (NM Tech and Mustard Seed Alum) - 2014



### **Magic Carpet Made of Steel 2014**

Bus-driver Andrew Horton, a long-time friend from church, guided me on his day off in 3/2014 using the California Amtrak train from Oakland to the Sacramento State Railroad Museum. It was a busman's holiday for Andrew. This triggered nostalgia about my one-way ride on the Santa Fe *El Capitan* train to college in 1971.



**Figure 50 – Historic Controls – Modern Engine, Sacramento – 3/2014**

For my birthday, I purchased three train simulator games, each as difficult as a real cab with the complex physics of route and weights hauled or set up as easy as a toy train. My computer needed a new mid-range video card to run these.

### **Salem, Oregon by Train 7/2014**

Dan and JoAnne Hegland, formerly of LLNL, upon retiring in Washington State moved to Salem, Oregon. They invited me up to pick in-season berries with them in 7/2014.

I introduced them to my New Mexico Tech alum David and Gayle Elsbernd, living in Salem since college days. I last saw the Heglands 25 years prior and not seen David since our 1976 graduation. Our friendships picked up where we left off as if time stood still. Only our graying and thinning palettes betrayed the decades.

This visit was without an agenda (scary), done at the last minute (scarier), and via the Amtrak Coast Starlight (scary new) as an overnight trip.

Sleeping upright in Coach Class was dreadfully difficult at my height but it tested the East Bay transit system to travel to Salem from home without using my car or needing an experienced guide like Andrew: Bus to BART to Taxi to Amtrak.

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**Figure 51 – Hegland Bikes and Amtrak in Salem (J. Hegland 7/2014)**

We four hiked the nine-mile loop of Silver Falls Park. We unintentionally wore AWANA team colors (green, red, blue, and yellow). That was a God-thing. Both the Heglands and I have each led in these student Bible clubs for ten years. Along with the bountiful succulent vine-ripe berries, I loved hiking behind several waterfalls.



**Figure 52 - Silver Falls Park in AWANA Colors – 7/2014**  
L-R: Harry, David Elsbernd, JoAnne and Dan Hegland



**Dunsmuir, California 8/2014**

Bob Sherwood and Steve Wampler invited several LLNL friends to Dunsmuir for the best drinking water in California. Natural ice-cold spring water continually flows from city drinking fountains. It was not a “doing” but a “being” week of mostly resting.



**Figure 53 - Hedge Creek Falls, Dunsmuir (J. Morris 8/2014)**  
L-R: Micah and Steve Wampler, Harry, Bob Sherwood

The Sacramento River impressed me during our record drought, which flowed at peak for fishermen. We hiked several miles daily through town and picked blackberries along the way. Jeff Morris and I hiked the easy nearly level sylvan trail past Fern Spring that shared part of the Pacific Crest Trail at Castle Crags Park, just south of Dunsmuir.



**Figure 54 - Fern Spring, Castle Crags Park (J. Morris 8/2014)**

### **Salem, Oregon by Tent 8/2015**

I revisited Salem by a three-week grand circle trip in 8/2015, car camping driving north and south. It was 30 years since I camped in a tent. A bike carrier let me cycle but few places were flat enough for my poor skills. A long and wide cot made tenting restful. I camped at forest campgrounds (\$10 to \$19/night) and State parks (\$28 to \$43/night).

At Hat Creek Cave (lava tube) campground, the summer yielded to 40-degree mornings. I enjoyed the nearby but lightly used trail to splatter cones. These geologic wonders hid among chest-high chaparral over a steep hill from the parking area.

The mostly outdoor Fort Crook Museum at Fall River Mills included buildings moved onto property from the Civil War and early timber industry. Like the Kern County Museum in Bakersfield, artifacts were arranged in-situ as if the owner left on an errand.

I tented at Railroad Park Resort, cycled to Dunsmuir for church and visited LLNL friends (Sherwood and Wampler). I hiked up the Castle Crags dome trail alone (uphill at a 20% grade) but I bailed at Indian Springs. The three-hour hike used two canteens of water.

The Valley of the Rogue Park hosted six miles of a riverfront trail to Rogue, Oregon. I swam in the ice-cold Rogue River and cycled to town for dinner. I found a superb hole-in-the-wall diner: Rogue Burritos (like TOGO's but for burritos) where a thorn found my tire. After repaired twice, the tire leaked flat twice during the six-mile ride back to camp.

The Hegland family hosted me while in Salem with a much-needed shower and laundry. We cycled on Mento-Brown Island and toured the Art Museum and Deepwood Mansion. This finished the five 'must-see' sites of Salem started last year. In the evenings, we complained about and solved a jigsaw cityscape of blues, dark grays, and blacks. My college friend David Elsbernd warmly welcomed me to his Catholic evening service.



**Figure 55 - Star Wars with Bill Cook, Grants Pass (D. Cook 8/2016)**



## Walk With Me – A New Song

A 35-year promise, as noted, pushed me to locate my parent's farm in Mapleton. The current owner recommended the two nearby Sweet Creek Falls, which I hiked to both.

For the coastal Umpqua Lighthouse Park, I added a tent cover for heavy rain that night with pleasant seaside temperatures. The drive inland gave multiple shades of green.

Bill and Donna Cook warmly welcomed my afternoon visit in Grants Pass (Bill was my former supervisor). I needed to race off to the Grayback NFS campground before dusk.

The nearby Oregon Caves still felt like the 1981 ZORK text adventure. (“*You are in a maze of twisty little passages.*”, “*You are in a forest with an iron grate nearby.*”) I owned the campground almost alone for two nights. An adjacent bubbly creek provided water using my new Sawyer filter. The sky was so intensely dark (no campground lights) that a full moon woke me up when it found a gap in the tree canopy.



**Figure 56 - Camp at Grayback NFS, Oregon Caves NP - 8/2015**

The coastal drive gave a glorious introductory scene of Crescent Bay from the top of the hill on US101. I walked down shore for a better photo of the huge haystack rocks in the sandy bay. A southbound rest stop at Trinidad hosted a glade of picnic benches on a secluded forested cliff trail with private views of two other haystack rocks at sea.

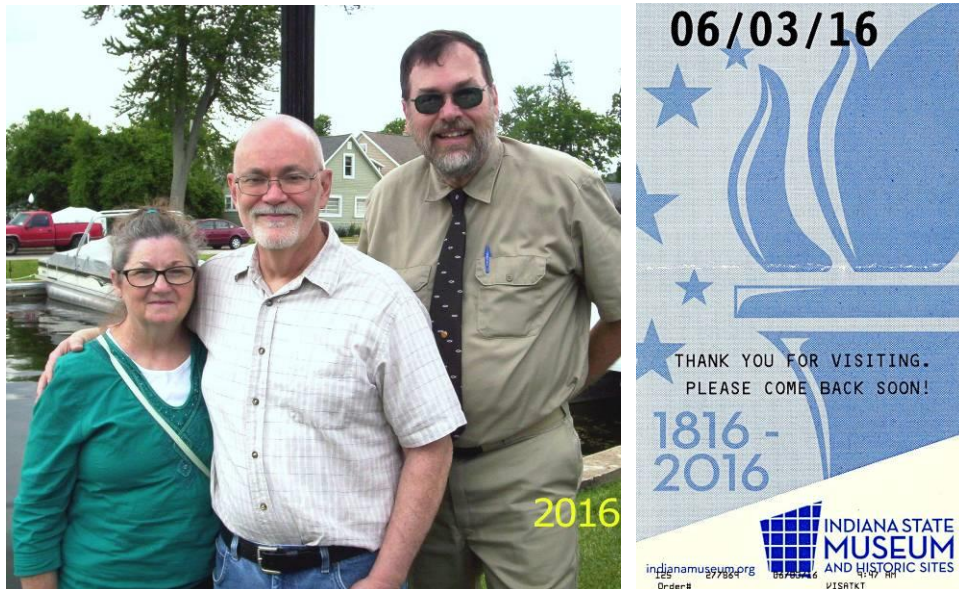
Albee Creek campground in the Humboldt Redwoods listed three giant trees on a 3-mile hike. This remote one-lane locale was five miles west of Founder's Grove. It was worth a longer stay that included an untended 1800's apple orchard with a family of deer. The buck stayed watchful only two trees away. Back in Livermore, I wandered the house mumbling the "E.T." movie lines: "*Home... Home... E.T. Phone Home*"

The car got a flat tire once back in my driveway due to a cracked rubber stem. My tires indeed ran for the warranted 40K. I was amazed that God watched over me the entire trip and for many errands with that compromised stem on nearly used tires.

### **Northern Indiana - 6/2016**

For my first time in Indiana, I visited friends from my early days as a believer in Jesus. This 2016 trip followed e-mail interviews in 2015 for memoir chapters.

Life-long believers Daniel and Christine Hawkins (northern Indiana) were both in the Royal High Marching Band with me, and last seen 45 years ago. Dan, recovering from spinal cancer chemotherapy, drove me to farms of their grown children, to Jack Rittenhouse's boyhood towns, and to Amish/Mennonite farmland.



**Figure 57 – Christine/Dan Hawkins and Indiana Bicentennial - 6/2016**

Many Amish buggies used the wide bicycle lanes of the highway even in a drizzling rain. We toured the MennoHof museum of Amish/Mennonite history.

After Dan's Baptist church service, we visited Winona Lake to take in a citywide Art Fair (where evangelist Billy Sunday (1862-1935) lived and preached to crowds after 1911).

### **Southern Indiana**

The full-on faith-full Hawley, Jansen, Schilling, and Heid families (all in southern Indiana) attended New Mexico Tech with me. I last saw each 35 years ago at the 1981 Mustard Seed Coffeehouse reunion.

Michael Hawley drove me to museums, to family reunions, to a men's lunch gathering that he leads, to farms of their grown children, and let me pick his son's blueberries. We breakfasted in Louisville, Kentucky with three other college believers. Paul Jansen then invited us all to his two-story log cabin with 1800's chinking between hand-adzed logs.





**Figure 58 - New Mexico Tech Grandfathers - 6/2016**  
L-R: Owen Schilling, Paul Jansen, Michael Hawley

Upon my return home to Livermore, Gary Schmierer visited. He was my dorm roommate, an active believer at New Mexico Tech last seen 30 years ago.



**Figure 59 - Gary Schmierer - 6/2016**

### Yellowstone - 2016

In 2016, my daughter Karen drove on our first visit to Yellowstone on a 9-day first tent trip with the grand-teens. I paid gas and my senior pass reserved campsites. We hiked the Donner Summit nature trail in California, tasted salt from a salt flat in mid-Nevada, and waded in Salmon Falls Creek at the Idaho border.



Figure 60 - Taggart Lake trail in Grand Teton NP - 8/2016

We visited:

- Shoshone Falls (and swam in the greenish swim area),
- Craters of the Moon (lava tubes and cinder cone hikes),
- EBR-1 Nuclear Reactor (museum),
- Mesa Falls Scenic Bypass,
- Yellowstone (3 nights),
- Grand Tetons (2 nights)
- Fort Hall replica (with teenager-suitable museum)

### Central Coast California - 2017

A 2017 trip to **Lompoc** (Lawm-Poke) for the wedding for Nathan and Rebekah Bolin let me visit five historic faith sites on the coast. Nathan graduated from my AWANA club as a Citation winner in 2012. The couple are full up believers and best friends for years.

I plan to visit all 21 Spanish Missions in California. For this trip, I saw:

- Santa Ines'
- Santa Barbara
- La Purisma SHP as rebuilt in the 1930's
- the initial site for La Purisma (doorway wall and unexcavated lavanderia)
- Bethania Lutheran Church for the original Danish community in Solvang



## Walk With Me – A New Song

They barricaded the parking lot in front of Santa Barbara Mission for a past chalk-artist festival with perhaps a hundred slowly fading into the asphalt. I went to high school in Simi Valley and so just had to capture this particular drawing.



**Figure 61 - Chalk Art Festival - Santa Barbara Mission - 7/2017**

I met Terry Wolf, formerly from Simi Valley. We last saw each other at a summer teen drama workshop. He was the lead actor and I played String Bass. I was unaware that he lived in Lompoc until I saw his Facebook post. An inquiry on a whim became a half-day walk at La Purisma and lunch. Neither of us had visited that State Park.



**Figure 62 – Olive Press, La Purisma Mission SHP– 7/2017**

## Walk With Me – A New Song

The Stations of the Cross in a shady grove at Santa Ines' had a surprise ending. An archway in wrought iron said "*Resurrection*". Yay! Jesus is not dead. He is alive!

The Lutheran Church gave a Danish cultural nod. A sailor who survived a tough voyage home hung a model of the ship from the ceiling inside his home church as a thanksgiving. The elegant hand carved pulpit and altar furnishings were intended for Europe but the buyer reneged. The sculptor sold the entire lot for pennies to this local church.

Unexpected historical gems were the:

- house museum complex for the Lompoc Historical Society
- Carnegie Library home for the Lompoc Museum (Chumash anthropology and fossils of a modern-looking dolphin and herring fish in diatomite rock)
- Elverhoj (Elf Home) of Solvang Danish culture
- Lompoc's one-room schoolhouse

They told me that Amtrak stops at Surf Beach, which intrigued me to drive to discover families waiting for the 11:40am northbound. This unstaffed open-air platform, eight miles from town, has no ticketing or buses. Riders bought tickets on-line.

With the train delayed, I made several friends while inquiring about their use. My AWANA shirt prompted one family to offer a gospel lyric (a mix of: Gospel Train, People Get Ready, Last Train to Heaven, and Folsom Prison Blues). They were delighted when I conflated a line "*Woo! Woo! Hear the engine chugging, coming around the bend.*" Sure enough, the Amtrak Surf Liner came around the bend at that moment.



**Figure 63 - Amtrak Platform, Surf Beach - 7/2017**

Jeremiah Cox, 2012 (edited):

*Surf Beach (Lompoc-Surf) is the most remote station on the system but still receives two trains per day. It was the last central coast station to open [only] for the Amtrak Surfliner (5/2000). A branch runs inland for freight trains that serve Lompoc. This [passenger platform] sits [forlornly on the beach] in the shadow of Vandenberg Air Force Base. Coast Highway 1 runs inland for 70 miles from Gaviota Pass. The easy (and only legal way) to see the spectacular desolate coast is from the two California Surfliners or the Coast Starlight.*

*A small parking lot serves beach goers. It has simple fencing with a short path out to the platform that directly overlooks the Pacific Ocean. This becomes a pedestrian crossing complete with lights and bells in the middle of the long platform across two tracks to the wild dunes of the Surf Beach.*

<http://subwaynut.com/california/amtrak/surf/index.php>



**Oregon by Car – 6/2017**

I re-visited the Hegland family in 2017 in **Salem**– My hosts, Dan and Joanne Hegland, formerly of our Livermore Asbury Methodist church, drove me to Newport lighthouses. The tallest in Oregon used liquid pig fat (not kosher!) At 3 cents per gallon, it beat whale oil at \$1. The shortest lighthouse in Oregon had red panels for a red-white signature.

We picked blueberries and blackberries in Salem prior to dinner with David and Gayle Elsbernd. David runs 100 miles cross-country for fun. He graduated from New Mexico Tech with me. We all gladly caught up with each other since my 2015 visit.

I made a day-visit to two families in **Newburg**. David and Linda Venable lavished 15 years upon Faith Academy High School students in Manila as teachers and Principal. Anne and I met them at a Lay Witness Mission for the Methodist Church in Farmersville, California. They had then decided to join Wycliffe full-time, now retired.

Peter and April Wassei were recently from our Livermore Trinity Baptist church. Their daughter Cloe raises goats, two of which she delivered herself. She and best bud Julia Collins (2017 Citation winner from my AWANA club) are both veterinarian bound.



**Figure 64 - Dan Hegland, Cape Meares – 6/2017  
Karen Briley, Santa Rosa Iron Man – 7/2017**

**Santa Rosa, California – 7/2017**

My daughter invited me to her grueling Iron Man in 2017 with 1800 competitors and thrice as many friends in **Santa Rosa**. Karen swam 2.5 miles in Sonoma Lake, cycled 112 miles to town, and ran a marathon. At the finish line with a huge smile, she looked still fresh after 14 hours (dawn to dusk). Her then firefighter boyfriend Iron Man Ricardo drove as her crucial Sherpa and my spotting guide.



**Corona, California – 10/2017**

In 2017, I visited my Schroeder cousins Kurt (and Mary) and Mark (and Cindy) in Riverside. I had not seen them for 40 years. They pastor two churches in Riverside.



**Figure 65 - Kurt and Mark Schroeder, Riverside - 10/2017**

Kurt unobtrusively introduced me to Gods Holy Spirit 47 years ago (see **Coming of Age**). He asked me to speak about my faith life at his small Wednesday night gathering. Mark attended. Mary recorded the impromptu interview unawares. I had just attended the Baptist Convention three freeway-exits away. Since unscripted, it felt like talking to family. I linked the video on my web site from my YouTube Channel.

A day later, I visited the Corona Heritage Park (local historical museum) and a bit distant from Riverside, the March Field Museum (Air Force).

### Israel – 11/2017

A ‘by-the-way’ conversation in 2017 with Tom and Barbara Soules of Livermore Heritage Guild led to an Internet five-day bus tour of Israel with them. I had seen many photos of most sites but none in context of the entire country.

Oy! Both the Boeing 777 and Airbus had painful legroom, locking my kneecap between the seats in front (definitely not for people over six feet tall). For the return 14 hours, I asked for a bulkhead seat. Israel tourism advised us against stamping our passports since it locks us out of travel to or even through Muslim-dominated countries. Instead, kiosk machines scanned our passports and issued slips in lieu of stamping our passport.



Figure 66 - Passport Entrance/Exit Slips - 11/2017

Our guide, Tanya, was secular Jewish but easily quoted Gospel passages backed up by archeological evidences for each site. Since this was a fast orientation, we abbreviated tours at all sites and sadly skipped museums.



Figure 67 - Capernaum Synagogue Archeological Site – 11/2017

The rural kibbutz by Lake Galilee was my favorite respite. The airy cafeteria, the tree-lined ambiance, and the quarters felt like an old-style summer camp. I woke to an open window and bird song. Every meal had salad varieties freshly made. My doctor warned me but with Pepto-Bismol, I had no ill effects. Lunch of a shawarma pita in Jerusalem was fast, nutritious, delicious, filling, and my new favorite Middle East dish.

## Walk With Me – A New Song

I shoved huge kabobs at our Magdala lunch into a pita pocket with salad/yogurts for three lamb/beef burgers for \$23. Others had an entire fish. The head and eyeballs for me, hmmm, not so much, but the Asian dentist across from me said it was the tastiest part.

We visited awe-inspiring Bet She'an National Park an hour south of Galilee. I never knew this large-scale archeological gem existed! When no one else stepped up to speak within the ancient open-air theater in Bet She'an, I stood upon that pagan stage saying:

*“I perceive that you are very religious with your many statues to the gods. I even saw a podium inscribed with the words, ‘To the Unknown God’. I stand here today to proclaim to you that Unknown God.”*

The tour focused upon me as I mentioned that this is how Paul spoke to the Athenians on Mars Hill. I never said who that Unknown God was from the stage. However, some key thoughts identify my staged intent. While many arguments to the contrary and evidences for a naturalistic sans spiritual existence, there is ultimate purpose through Jesus. Nothing else fully satisfies nor even matters as I age, namely:

- The Bible tells of a Creator and miracles.
- Christ-mas needed a functioning Jewish faith (made possible via Hanukkah)
- Christ-mas is based entirely upon a miracle.
- Christ-mas is mercantilism without Jesus.
- Christ-mas is only validated upon His Resurrection.



**Figure 68 - Bet She'an National Park – 11/2017**

In Bethlehem, the Church of the Nativity had long lines. Therefore, I wandered over to a statue of St. Jerome. Why honored here? Tom led me to the stairwell to the cave where Jerome translated the Bible into Latin (the Vulgate). We got peacefully down (and out) just before hordes of tourists descended the staircase for an hour-long service.



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St. George in Bethlehem surprised me since that image of a 12<sup>th</sup> century knight on horseback spearing a dragon appears in Moscow, Russia. However, St. George lived near Bethlehem and was a humble martyr of the 300's. Honored worldwide among the Orthodox, he never wore a 12<sup>th</sup>-Century knight's armor and likely never on a horse. He grave is in Caesarea Maritima on the Israeli coast.

The most spiritual time was reciting the Sh'ma (Deut. 6:4-9) and my own prayers at the Wailing Wall. I did not expect the transfixing moment of the cooled polished stone thousands before have touched. When my eyes closed, hands to the wall, nothing else briefly mattered, until startled by an enthusiastic Bar Mitzvah celebration.

The underground bazaar felt like I ran a fraternity gauntlet. I did not need or buy any more dust catchers!

Jordan spitefully razed the Jewish Quarter in 1948. That destruction allowed archeological probes after 1967.

They found a colonnaded Roman street fifteen feet below fill dirt from the many destructions. They found a section of Hezekiah's wall to defend against Assyria.



Figure 69 - Jerusalem from Mount of Olives – 11/2017



**S.F. Bay Sail - 7/2019**

Trinity pastors and 12 church friends shared costs for a three-hour summer Ketch sailing tour of the San Francisco Bay in 2019. Driving the surrounding freeways masks the size of this enormous body of water. We almost reached Alcatraz Island after 90 minutes from Oakland with sunny but chilly ocean winds blowing through the Golden Gate.



**Figure 70 - Trinity Church Sailing Trip – 7/2019**

## Elbow Crash

My pretending to be 16 resulted in a broken elbow on 3/1/2020. The AWANA teens played ultimate tag (a version of “banana tag”) on the gym half-court. Rules: “*Everyone is “it” and tries to tag the others. Once tagged, she sits in place and keeps track of who tagged her. She gets up when the teen who tagged her has himself been tagged. If two people tag each other at the same time, they do rock paper scissors and the loser sits down.*” The game play visually reminds me of a nuclear chain reaction model.

I ran full tilt at a faster smaller swerving target, swooped my arm to tag, missed, and the unchecked centrifugal force spiraled me hard upon my right elbow. It drove the keys on my belt well into my right hip for a nasty bruise running down my thigh. It felt as if an invisible force threw me harder to the gym floor than mere twisting mechanics of angular momentum. Both my doctor and surgeon now require me to act my age.

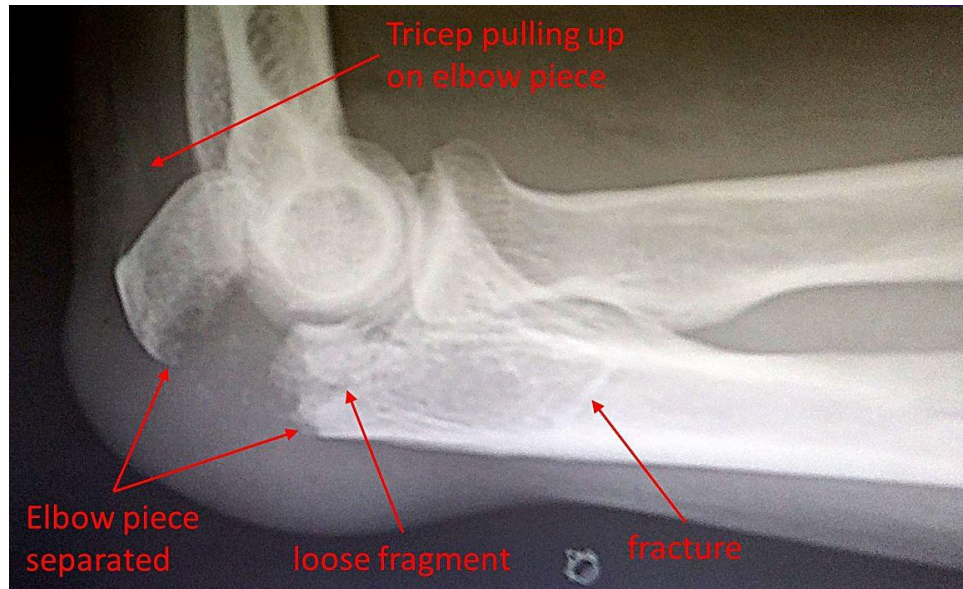


Figure 71 - Elbow Fracture - 3/2020

The surgeon reassembled the elbow with two four-inch pins and surgical wire. This matches a fracture Anne had in 1997 tripping on a lifted section of sidewalk. She needed a 3-inch plate and six screws, with a second surgery to remove the hardware.

I had difficulty operating left-handed. Immediately after, the country went into virus quarantine with no physical therapy after a month in a splint cast. Livermore Heritage Guild and Trinity Church members drove me around in the early days of recovery. The surgeon later examined my elbow via a post-cast Zoom appointment.

Ever so slowly, I regained some range of motion. It was not until May that I could even touch my face, make a partial fist, or type on the keyboard. By December, I could easily drive, type, lift 20 pounds, reach behind my head, and make a half-fist. My arm does not hang straight. Of course, when I whack that elbow, I know all about it.

### Extended Family

I avoid duplicating news of adult family members. You can readily find their daily posts on Facebook. However, big news occurred in 2018. My son married into a ready-made family of three young kids. I attended their baby shower party. In November, his wife Cat gave birth to his first son. James was on cloud nine.

A week later, Cat and James brought over 7-day Jayce to hold. James cellphone has videos and a zillion photos, but the one below is my favorite.



**Figure 72 - James holding Jayce - 11/2018**

Thus, in 2018, six grandchildren now tag me as their Grandpa (Alexus, Aidan, Halley, JT, Naomi, Jayce) from the newborn to a 19-year-old out on her own.

Karen knows that I am not a party, dinners, or holiday extrovert. Given my desire for low-effort quietude and a lonely Thanksgiving for her and grandson Aidan, she made an easy pasta Thanksgiving meal with fresh veggies. The meal simplicity and peaceful visit, which included walking her dogs on a railway-bed path, became a perfect way to have family time together. She taught me how to play Othello and soundly trounced me twice.



## Walk With Me – A New Song



**Figure 73 - Karen's IronMan Trophy Wall - 2018**

We had more mutual bridge building in 2019 and 2020 with follow-up visits to their homes (both summer and at Thanksgiving). James and Cat drove down from their new Washington State home for Thanksgiving break in 2020. I located and gave both Karen and James several banker's boxes of their childhood to close out this decade.

My two over-the-top extroverts wonder what to do with their introvert father. I best enjoyed those quiet walks/biking in parks and talks over dinner. I challenged shy Aidan with Stratego (his favorite old-school game) when not playing high-end RPG games.



**Figure 74 - Quiet Dinner (K.Briley, 11/2019)**



### **Acknowledgments**

I edited and credited materials from public sources in offset boxes.

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