

Great Memories:

of Dennis R. DeLong



On the occasion of his 70th Birthday
December 29, 2011

Contributed by Family and Friends

Table of Contents

I. Forward	.....	1-6
II. Memories	.....	7-
A. From Deb	.....	7-11
B. From Mike and Pat	.....	11-14
C. From Andrea	.....	14-15
D. From Doug and Linda	.....	15-16, 19
E. From Sam, Clare and Michael Bodjiak	.....	16
F. From Nancy	.....	16-17
G. From Tom and Shannon	.....	17
H. From Lowell and Asta	.....	17-18
I. From Gay	.....	18
J. From Belle	.....	18-19

K. From Rob **19-20**

III. Acknowledgments **21**

70 Memories of and about Dennis R. DeLong (forward written by Rob DeLong)

I. Forward

To the best of my recollection some of Dennis' (Dad's) earliest memories were as a young boy in Oxford, NY. His grandparent's "Addie" and Floyd Wackford were a strong presence in his life at that time. And one of my favorite stories he tells of that period was when his Grandfather caught him being truant from elementary school, grabbed him by the collar, marched him to school and forcibly placed him in his seat at his desk (#1). Soon after the war his mother met the man who would eventually become the larger than life "Grandpa Joe" to all the grandchildren, and I can remember Dad telling fond stories of trips to go up to the farm (#2). As everyone knows the farm is one of the most bucolic settings in upstate NY, nestled in a little heavenly valley. Land on either side of which, he and Uncle Doug still own because it is so meaningful to them both. A beautiful and serene place, and when they moved there it became the place I think Dad would still associate with "home".

Their time on the farm was for the most part, greatly happy. Although there was initially a bit of an adjustment period as I understand it between he and Grandpa Joe, with Dad being used to being the man in his mother Lois's life. From stories Uncle Doug and Aunt Nancy tell, although "Dennis the Menace" has maybe always been a bit befitting, he must have taken out some of this on them (at least early on). Grandpa Joe expected the boys to help out on the farm and Dad and Uncle Doug worked hard at chores and all the asundry other tasks it takes to run a farm successfully, which they did. One great story Dad tells is after working on the farm essentially almost a full day by the time he got to school, is how he would fall asleep at his desk and the other (non-farm) children in his class would poke fun at him. Until one day when the teacher snapped at them saying, "that boy learns more asleep than most of you all do wide awake" (#3).

Pam and I being the eldest grandchildren I do have fleeting memories of the last few years of the farm and remember what a joyful ambience it always held when we visited. I remember Grandpa Joe bouncing Pam and I on his hairy chest and him hand-rolling Prince Albert cigarettes. And Grandma Lois making the most yummy pies and things for everyone to enjoy in the afternoon's prior to doing chores when everyone gathered around the table. After the untimely passing of Joe, the farm became a less happy place and eventually it was sold off. Looking back with what little understanding I had then as a young boy myself, I think this was a troubled period and difficult time for Dad and it eventually led to his leaving Gay his first wife and the mother of his children (myself and Andrea).

However the story of how he fell in love with Judy his second wife could be a romance novel in itself. I can remember car rides in his little car back then and trips to NYC. And coloring in Judy's apartment in Albany, this being a transition period in his life as he completed graduate work at SUNY Albany. Prior to this period we lived in several houses, the most memorable of which was a duplex on Lange St., where right next door lived Lowell and Asta, Lowell was Dad's childhood friend from Oxford. One of my favorite memories of this period was the time when a local teenage girl broke into our mailbox and Dad ... being morally miffed and royally pissed off, pressed charges against her with the police (#4)

Soon he re-married to Judy, and while I don't have specific memories of the marriage, those early years when they were together I think he was quite happy. They moved first as I recall to a town outside Albany [Vorheesville (sp?) Maybe?]. I can remember going hiking with Judy and contracting on one particular hike the nastiest case of poison ivy. I don't know how long they were there, probably not more than a couple of years but next Dad did a stint as a visiting professor at a small college in Maine. I can remember visiting them up there. We went fishing in the brackish waters near the coast, of course never catching one thing (#5)! I can also remember a summer camping trip to Moose Head Lake around this time which was an amazing place and canoeing peacefully through the lake (#6). One of my favorite memories of their time in Maine was when Dad asked me if I liked clams and I said "Yeah"! So Dad went out and bought a whole bushel and I couldn't stomach the things after eating only one or two. So Judy got really creative with all the possible things one could make out of clams. I'd venture to say that to this day, one of Dad's favorite meals is... "pasta with clams" ☺ I also think maybe the two of them struggled a bit financially that year because although Judy always kept their houses cold...damn it was COLD in that Maine house! (#7)

After Maine they relocated to Plattsburgh, NY. The car trips to Plattsburgh from Rochester I also remember fondly. We would usually play some kind of game and this is probably where the ABC game of NY towns and cities came from (#8). In it one starts out by naming some NY township somewhere that someone else (usually Dad) can verify. Then the next person, usually me or Judy (or later Andrea as she got older) ... would have to name a town in NY which begins with the last letter of the previous named town. Of course the trick was to come up with places like Albany which ended with a Y or some other more rare letter making the task more difficult for the next person. Anyone who knows Dad, knows how competitive he is and so he would eventually become the winner of these heated contests. As I recall his time in graduate school there were marathon sessions of board games like Monopoly and these also went late into the night so that Dad would eventually end up winning these too. I also recall Judy and I on car trips playing the magical game

of guessing when the light was going to run green. During this period I don't know why but, I associate these time segments with the cars they had, and they had a series of VWs, especially wagons. Another good memory of trips during that time period were those from Plattsburgh to Vermont where Judy's beloved Aunt Eloise and Uncle Cliff lived. Cliff was a consummate sportsman and I think he is who made me so inclined and first introduced me to the fly-rod. Well in one visit I was asked to go out to one of their VWs parked in the driveway of the lovely cabin Cliff and Eloise owned, and managed to lock the keys in the car (#9). Of course we were a long long ways from home and I was *persona non grata* for quite some time after and Dad still likes to tell that story. But those were happy times and I recall a lot of late night "imbibery" with friends of theirs coming over and what I am guessing from the sounds emanating from the kitchen from my bedroom were some intense poker games. It is from these that I think we extended the poker tradition to the cabin Uncle Doug designed and they built on our property in NY (#10). Of course the Plattsburgh time period ended in Dad and Judy separating and Dad eventually moving back to Albany to start the next chapter in his life.

I'll start with the car here again and the sweet Nissan 280Z he got during this "batchelor" period (#11). Which reminds me of the story of when Robert Kennedy visited Albany and Dad picking him up in his beat up Plymouth Duster (the car he had before THE Z!) in which the passenger door was broken (#7). So the Senator had to slide into his seat from the driver's side (#8). As I recall Dad also had to pay for a few things as evidently the Senator while having millions apparently had no "pocket change" (#12). I recall Dad at first living in some sort of condo in a town outside of Albany and then moving in with Jane and Phil. This was a happy arrangement. I know one of his favorite things during that time was the softball team the three of them played on (#13) and the après game chenigans they got into. Speaking of chenigans, he and Phil shared many and there are several favorites of mine from that time. One of them involve he and Phil "spying" quite discreetly into the window of a neighbor where apparently an attractive college co-ed resided...(#14) [I'll leave this one up to your imagination]. Another is the time he, Phil and others apparently went to a family type restaurant and Phil acted as if he was a disabled or mentally compromised individual somewhat famously insisting upon the "SALAD BAR". I still laugh thinking about how Dad tells that story of his great friend, the mega-funny larger than life, Phil Laroque (#15). Jane was in retrospect a great friend and one with benefits, the two of them sharing a great love and chemistry together. In many ways she gave him a run for his money, having both brains, a great spirit and determination and also being a helluva an athlete (#16). Those were happy happy times for him I think.

The next chapter of his life I would say began as he took on more responsibility at Empire State College. This was a car period I think when he had a Chevy Blazer maybe? And then began his series of Lincolns (#17). His love life during this "post-Jane " and "pre-Deb" period was influenced most I think probably by Shelby and his mercuric relationship with Jean (about which I wrote one of my first original songs). At one period where the relationship with Jean was most intense, I recall a Christmas vacation where I visited just after finishing college and being somewhat disappointed at us having to spend Christmas day with Jean's family whom I had never met before. I remember pouting somewhat but in retrospect of course he was right (#20). That the Christmas spirit, is one like Thanksgiving, that should be shared with others (a lesson later solidified by my own amazing wife).

Of course finally along came Deb and her daughter Tam. She really rocked his world and has been his rock now for most of my adult life for which we are all grateful. That was a wedding and reunion I am sure I speak for all his loved ones we all cherish (#21). She's just the right mix, to go happily along with him wherever and to only take too much of the "Dennis the Menace". I love how they play golf together and have so much in common and I love how they are such great friends and so compatible. We love spending time with the two of them.

This brings us to the real point of this little book. A celebration of Dad's life. In the form of loved ones from his life and the moments recorded in the... *"deepest connections of their neuronal processes"*, which I say to my students when I want them to remember something. But here are the moments which made an impact, funny or sad, which is to say a brief recollection of the time spent with loved ones, favorite memories of the time cherished and memorialized with Dr. Dennis R. DeLong; professor, academic, college dean, leader, writer, father, grandfather, husband and friend.

II. Memories

From Deb:

(#22) Dear Dennis,

Rob asked for my best memories from our nearly 20 years together. Little did he know how overwhelming this request would be for me to fulfill. How can I find just a few, when there is something every day we are together which makes me laugh, makes me think or is just interesting?. OK, I mean when we are not too busy going to work, or involved in



individual pursuits. But that is the thing, even with busy lives and varied but not parallel interests, we still connect in a deep meaningful way.

All my love to you, deb

(#23) Dear Dennis,



If you think about it, our relationship survived situations where it may have otherwise foundered if we had met earlier, or if we were different people. While I have many wonderful memories of our first months of dating (who could not forget that wonderful first flush of love and intimacy), the most significant remembrance was maintaining our connection through your relocation to Syracuse. We both knew that the separation could doom our nascent relationship. We decided that talking everyday would be one way to overcome the impact of separation. Without fail, you called me every day of that separation and virtually every day we have ever been apart since then. This one consistent act of love ties me to you.

All my love to you, deb

(#24) Dear Dennis,

We've had so much fun over the years. Sometimes simply going to dinner to a new place was enough to create anticipation, other times, returning to a favorite restaurant provided a setting for contentment. In either case, our mutual in tasting and sharing food makes us both happy. Our best and most interesting conversations inevitably happen over dinner out (sometimes in too!). We've had fun in low-end diners (remember Waffle House on Christmas Day?), and much higher end restaurants. Your willingness to mix in a variety of cuisines keeps it all fresh, in spite of your preference for Italian.



Cheers! Love, deb

(#25) Dear Dennis,



Beyond dining out, my other favorite times with you are traveling. We have traveled and lived in so many places! While I cannot pick any one favorite place, I asked you for your favorite. With no hesitation, you said Santa

vi

Barbara, but then added San Diego. As we talked about this, we talked about our time in California, and other favorite trips in the West: Grand Canyon, Death Valley, Los Vegas, San Francisco, our trip down the Big Sur on PCH 101. There was something about the golden light in California which we have never experienced anywhere else. We traveled by "Planes, Trains and Automobiles." In the east, we also traveled by Ferry boats. When we are both retired, please let's revisit all of these places and more...

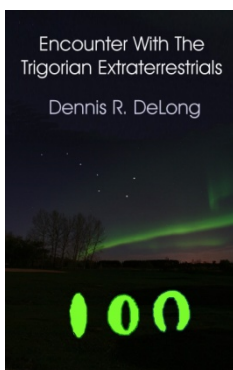
Love, deb

(#26) Dear Dennis,

Upon your first stretch of not working after Marist, I remember all of the different reactions you had: from astonishment to anxiety that you didn't have to get up and go to work every day. It was funny that you discovered early on that you did not like sleeping in if I was up. You said you felt like a "lazy lout" and returned to your self appointed job of getting up first to make coffee and then bringing a cup to me to wake me up – something you were responsible for all of our time together while we both worked. I still luxuriate in waking up to a cup of coffee brought to me every morning.



Love, deb



(#27) Dear Dennis,

In finding your new retired persona, initially it seemed you were at a loss to find meaning and a sense of purpose. I was so pleased when you found both in writing your amazing Sci-Fi book. Every night upon arriving at home, I was treated to the best selections from your writing each day. Your enthusiasm was contagious and fun. Now that you are actually working on publishing the book, I fully expect that your efforts to promote the book, once underway will be with similar commitment and energy.

Love, deb



(#28) Dear Dennis,

We have lived so many really interesting places and lovely homes (except for the stinky apartment in

Fishkill). It is hard to pick my favorite. I loved the carefree condo experience in Hartford with the amazing patio. Our home improvement efforts really made that place comfortable and interesting. Do you remember lining the floor of the patio with slate? The best location in terms of the great outdoors was certainly Irvine. My best memory there was the first Christmas spent in CA, where we took bikes to Huntington Beach and rode them for miles along the board walk. There was a colony of RVs parked along the boardwalk for Christmas Day. They had their awnings set up with tables and chairs out. We were so lucky to live there. Of the two locations where we lived in the Hudson Valley, I have to say that Ossining is now my favorite – although it took a lot of time, money and work to get it how we wanted it. The best part is sitting at our computers, and looking out at the river view, as I am right now. But, even after we leave, I am certain we will live in another place where we will be happy and comfortable. I am looking forward to another 20 years of our living and traveling together.

All my love, deb

(#29) Dear Dennis,

Despite what you say, you really are so very attached to your grandchildren. Clare, as the first, was the trail breaker. We literally did not know how to be grandparents! But, we started learning with her. Now she is nearly grown up, at 17, and will be off to college next year – with a scholarship! You are beside yourself with pride. Sarah was next, and grandparenting came a little bit easier. Since her birth happened while we were in CA, it tugged at our hearts that we were so far away. Now she is 10 years old, and we have seen her grow up and shared many events in her life. She really did capture us as grandparents, and keeps us on our toes.



It was the next grandchild announcement that Sammy was on his way, which triggered the decision to move back east. Sammy is an amazing kid, who just takes our breath away with how fast his mind works. We are blown away.

Moving East turned out to be a good decision, since we have since been rewarded with yet even more grandchildren! Danny at 6 is all boy, all of the time. He looks up to you as if you are his hero. In between his more mischievous moments, he is truly growing into nice young person. Jack's arrival was such an event for us. He too is all boy, but seeing him caring for his younger brothers is heartwarming. No matter what he is doing, he also looks to be sure he is helpful (to mom and dad too). Charlie is next. He can be so very engaging with his charming smile. He's not

quite old enough to think about others yet, but there are flashes that he too will be a loving little boy.

Now, about the twins. After the 6 that came before them, you'd think you had enough practice to hold and cuddle them. You still are not a "baby" kind of guy, but you do hold and feed them like a almost pro. We have the photos to prove this. I know you look forward to seeing how their personality emerges.

(#30) Dear Dennis,

You have such a nice way with people. Somehow everywhere we go, if you start talking to acquaintances and strangers, you immediately engage them. My favorite memory is when I first introduced you to my family. I didn't think about it, but they were somewhat intimidated because you were a college Dean, and from New York! But, upon meeting you, their concerns were replaced with pleasant recollections – you hunt and fish and grew up on a farm! As always, you found something that put everyone at ease. The most shining example of this was your kindness to my mom, who is very difficult to talk to. There you sat at her apartment or in family gatherings having pleasant exchanges. My heart is very warm with this memory.



IV. From Mike and Pat:

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ANTICS OF DENNIS R. DeLONG, Ph. D.

Prepared in Honor of the Seventieth Anniversary of His Nativity

(#31) **"Dennis in a Quandary"**: We had been vacationing in New England, if memory serves on Cape Cod, with Dennis and his lady. I think the lady was Shelby, but can not be absolutely certain because it was during one of Dennis' "lady dejour" eras. On our return trip we decided to extend our vacation by overnighing in a quaint, stereotypical New England inn. We "wined and dined" festively at the inn that Saturday night. The next morning we breakfasted at the inn – all of us a bit "fogged in" from the previous night's reveling. We were served by a college-age waitress who had obviously indulged, even more than had we, the evening before.

Most of us know Dennis describes himself as being “linear” and “literal,” but that mindset didn’t serve him well in his interchange with our hung-over waitress. To be fair, Dennis was the first to order. “Eggs over, sausage, home fries” At this point, the waitress inquired, in a clipped New England fashion, “An English muffin or an apple?” Dennis’ face went blank, as only his can when something doesn’t compute for him. His eyes widened, and I think they may have even started to rotate in opposite directions. Not parallel choices in Dennis’ mind -- he was befuddled by what he interpreted to be a choice of either a bread product or a raw fruit. Perceiving this, I interjected, “I think she means an apple muffin.” To this, the irritated waitress curtly replied, “Of course.”

(#32) “**Dennis the Defender**”: At least a couple of decades ago we met Dennis at the Albany Omni Hotel for the Friday “Happy Hour.” Four of us managed to find a table in the crowded, noisy lounge. Shortly thereafter I found myself alone at the table as the two ladies and Dennis departed for the rest rooms. A man, who obviously hadn’t waited for happy hour to start his imbibing, approached the table and started to make off with one of the four chairs.

As we were a party of four and there were only four chairs, I interrupted him, “Sorry, a lady is using that chair.” The man (not gentleman) growled back, “She’s not in it now.” (Perhaps he regularly patronized drinking establishments where he was permitted to obtain seating by throwing patrons from stools.) At this juncture, my sarcastic nature got the best of me, even though I had yet to have a drink, and I retorted, “It’s impossible for the lady to encumber the chair while she’s in the ladies’ lounge. She’s returning to the table.” Bad move, too much sentence structure for the drunk. He retorted that I was an *&!# (using a vulgarism for the anatomical reference to an anus.) I had not noticed Dennis approaching from behind me but became aware of his presence when, from over my right shoulder, came a most firmly voiced, “You look like and expert on *&!# s to me” (echoing the man’s expletive). At this the rube departed. Dennis had, unhaltingly and instinctively, rallied to his friend’s defense.

(#33) “**Dennis the Patrol Leader**”: During what I think was his second period of Albany residency, Dennis had a penchant for orchestrating gatherings* of diverse people to visit the local dining and drinking establishments. These social gatherings commonly met at “happy hour” on Fridays. It will probably not come as a surprise that these groups were predominantly, if not exclusively, of the feminine gender. I was constantly impressed by Dennis’ ability to repeatedly assemble a troop of revelers and dubbed these aggregation’s “Dennis’ Marching and Singing Society.”

Dennis always seems to enjoy the merriment of St. Patrick's Day and one year he invited us to join his marchers and singers for a St. Pat's Day celebration. Dennis had very carefully mapped out a pedestrians' pub crawl. This progressive drinking party was fastidiously planned in minute detail, *i.e.*, in a very "Dennis-esque" fashion. He had selected the pubs/bars to be visited and the aggregation knew full-well that Dennis would tolerate no deletions, substitutions, or additions to his itinerary. Moreover, for each establishment he had planned precise arrival and departure times, allotting time for "crawling" between them. His precise timing allowed late arrivals to catch-up with the group.

Pat developed a migraine-like headache after one beer. (Some time later we were to discover that it was a half a bottle of Genesee Cream Ale did us in.) She decided it would be best to return to the motel for a rest. Dennis invited us to rejoin them when she recovered, and he gave us their itinerary, complete with the specific times they would arrive at and depart from each establishment. In a few hours Pat wanted to rejoin the troop. I said that we would *never* find them as there was no way that Dennis would still have that "band of revelers" on schedule after hours of pub crawling. Still, she insisted. So, we headed for Downtown Johnny's, where the group was supposed to be, but when we arrived, they were nowhere in sight. Just as I was about to say "I told you so" in marched Dennis, right on schedule, with his small band of intrepid survivors. Some of "Dennis' Marauders" had apparently become casualties along the way, but "Mr. Organization" and the surviving members of his convivial troop arrived punctually at the final drinking establishment. We marveled at his ability to accomplish this feat.

*Note: With his penchant for organizing groups of people I chide Dennis that he is a "scout leader wannabe."

(#34) **"Dennis the Soft-Hearted Hunter"**: About a couple of decades ago, before the brothers DeLong had their hunting camp, I invited Dennis down to hunt deer. As it had been several years since Dennis had bagged a deer and he possessed a "doe tag" I sent him to my favorite stand and set out to try to move deer to him. As I advanced through the hard woods, I heard shots and was hoping that Dennis had a deer. When I met-up with him, he said that some poachers had moved in on the periphery of the woods and it was they who had been firing. However, he knew where the deer went. I sent him to a new watch and started tracking the deer. I was in a very dense, virtually impenetrable white pine stand, with a very short field of vision. The tracks in the snow turned directly toward where Dennis was to be standing. Still, no shots were fired. I was becoming a bit nervous as I was almost to the edge of the pines and the tracks were still headed

directly toward Dennis' supposed location. With the thickness of the pines, I would be invisible to Dennis until I was within ten yards of him. Quite frankly, at this point I was actually hoping that he had situated himself in the wrong position so that I wouldn't take a "pass-by" slug between the eyes. Finally, a shot was fired very close to me. I shouted out my location, burst out of the cover and spied Dennis standing exactly where he was supposed to be, but no deer at his feet. This, despite the fact that tracks had come very, very close to where I could see he had been standing.

With my characteristic subtlety I asked Dennis, "What the hell happened, didn't you see the deer?" He pointed to a location probably no more than 10 yards from him and said, "A doe came out and stood right there looking at me. She was so close that I could see her eyelashes. She was so beautiful that I couldn't shoot her, so I said 'get out of here deer' and she ran off." When I asked for an explanation of the shot I had heard Dennis said that he thought I might be upset with him for not shooting after I had crawled through the pines, so he fired one round after his newly found "friend" had bounded a safe distance away.

(#35) **"Dennis at the Mall":** Crossgates Mall had very recently opened when we visited Dennis for the weekend. Both Jane and Pat expressed an interest in seeing the new mall. I was okay with the idea, but Dennis resisted the notion mightily. First, it seemed that he opposed the construction of the mall on the pine bush as an unnecessary ecological destruction. Second, it seems he just doesn't like to "shop." Finally, the women won the day, and he agreed to lead a "tour" of Crossgates Mall. The next day, under Dennis' leadership, we embarked on a virtual "forced march" through the mall. In Penney's Pat innocently departed from the linear route Dennis had plotted in his mind; she veered to the right down an isle of purses. Unhappy at the insubordination of one of his troop, Dennis literally barked at her, "That's not on the tour!" Subsequently, the women proceeded to do a bit more undirected sightseeing. Dennis has no patience, let alone passion, for shopping. Thus, he made it blatantly obvious that he was disgruntled with this insubordination. Still, the women persisted in minor deviations from Dennis' tour route. Eventually Dennis spotted a female mannequin outfitted in tennis togs. She stood innocently on a platform at just the right height for Dennis to be able lift the hem of the tennis skirt and put his head beneath it, peering upward. Fearing what his next strategic move might be, the women readily departed.

(#36) **"Rules of Survival for Viewing Televised Buffalo Bills Games with Dennis"**

Rule Number One: Don't speak unless spoken to, especially at a critical moment — which is virtually any time. Even then, speak only in clipped fragments of sentences.

Rule Number Two: Wear ear plugs to protect your hearing. This is a necessity because whenever a fumble occurs Dennis leaps out of his chair as if ejected while bellowing in baritone “ball, ball, ball.” This just as if (1) the players could hear him; and/or (2) he was still on the gridiron playing for Oxford Academy's Blackhawks. Incidentally, as I recall, he always shouts precisely three iterations of the word “ball” -- just as his high school coach had taught the team to do.

Rule Number Three: Utter nothing which might be interpreted as being either a negative comment re. the Buffalo Bills or for that matter a positive comment about their opponent.

(#37) **“Dennis in the Dark”**: Dennis had arranged to overnight with us, though he knew that we had a “function” to attend at the College. Pat had set him up with snacks, adult beverages, the TV remote control and encouragement to use our computer to check his email Only upon our return home did we discover that the power – Rural Electric -- went off almost immediately after our departure. In a futile search for a flashlight Dennis stumbled about running into furniture and stubbing his toes. Unbeknownst to him the only functioning flashlights were not so conveniently stored in the cellar. Ever resourceful, he finally discovered a candle in a holder attached to the wall above the kitchen sink. He then searched for and found some matches and ignited the candle just in time for the power to come back on- line.

***NB: This compilation is from Michael (Mike) Lynch and Patricia (Pat) Moore. It is, however, written by Mike in his voice and style and Pat bears absolutely no responsibility for anything anyone might possibly take offense to. She contributed only factual information, no editorial asides.**

V. From Andrea:

When I began to come up with appropriate memories of my father to share, I realized that most fit into one of two themes...

The first theme are more circumstances that included my father planning my care and giving me way more credit for my maturity level than may have been deserved, rather than true interactive memories.

(#38) The first would be myself and Shannon flying on our own from Rochester to Florida to visit our grandmother. I think we were like 11 and 8? As I am sure you have all heard, I quite literally as instructed sat in our seats and waited to be called for our flights, thus missing the flight when they forgot about us, despite poor Shannon badgering me to go ask.

(#39) The second, apparently while I rode ski lifts alone, and my father and brother rode together, I developed a habit at the age of ten or so to pick up teenage men.

(#40) Lastly, I promise dad, although if my brother doesn't reach his goal of 70 memories I may have to bring out more of this type, and yes, I have several, was the time while visiting him in Albany he left me alone in his apartment at night while he went out with his current girlfriend. At some point in the evening, someone began to ring the doorbell over and over, and when I did not answer, his ex-girlfriend started yelling profanities outside from the sidewalk. He must have been thoughtful enough to give me a phone number to reach him, because he did come home when I called, scared out of my wits.

Ok, now onto the memories. It turns out some of my more favorite memories of my father are during road trips:

(#41) When I was little he would take me skiing, or to visit my gram in Florida, always telling me stories, getting me excited about crossing into different states and watching for the signs.

(#42) Once, we had driven to Corning when I was a teenager. He suggested we play music trivia, guessing artists on the radio. I snickered under my breath, thinking he was doomed, only to be shocked at how wide his interests and knowledge about music. Needless to say, he beat me.....badly. I had to start listening to country music after that just to stay in the running.

(#43) Ok, lastly, and I am not sure why I love this memory, possibly because it made me realize that once upon a time he loved my mother? I was visiting him at his house in Albany for thanksgiving, we were sitting in his living room on a bright and sunny day playing games, and he was staring at me, smiling. He said, "I love the blonde peach fuzz on your cheeks, your mom had that, too." Aw, he can be sweet, right?

From Doug and Linda:

(#44) Back in the 90,s when the family was still vacationing at Keuka, Dennis/Deb, Linda and I did alot of fishing together. After several years of catching only fair size Pike, One morning Linda caught a big Pike herself to Dennis's surprise she quickly "Named" it (a normal thing for Linda) and preceeded to throw it back in the water (also a very normal thing for Linda to do) I thought Dennis would go nuts and kill her. He was so mad the rest of the day and to this day still talks about it.

From Sam:

(#44) He says, "it was fun when we went to the discovery center together". "And I wish we got to spend more time together."

From Clare:

(#45) She says, "I remember the time Granpa let me drive the golf cart and I proceeded to smash it into a pole..."

From Michael Bodziak:

(#46) "At Keuka Lake, I asked Uncle Denny to wake me up for the morning fishing trip. When he did, I couldn't believe how really early it was! Uncle Denny laughed at me. (But I did go fishing.)"

From Nancy (DeLong) Bodziak:

(#47) "When I told Dennis that I was marrying Tom, he said: 'He's everything he should be.' I used that line as the theme of a poem I wrote for Tom for our wedding."

(#48) The frequent potty stops made Dennis and my recent trip to visit the Morgans about 3 hours longer than it should have been!

(#49) During an Adirondack Park camping trip many years ago, I awoke in the night to hear Dennis saying: "Hey, Bear!"

(#50) When I was sixteen, Dennis and Gay took me to a fraternity party at Cornell. I was ecstatic to be in the company of all those college "men." One particular young man took an interest in me, and so as not to discourage him, I told him I

was a freshman at Cortland. We were getting along just fine, when suddenly Dennis appeared and said it was time to go. Needless to say I was quite disappointed. In the car on the way home, I asked him why we had to leave, and he said, "The next thing that guy would have done is to ask you to go upstairs!" Innocently, I asked, "Why, what was upstairs?"

(#51) As kids, Dennis was constantly teasing me—couldn't walk by me without pulling my hair, snapping my neck or whatever. It's a wonder I have any nerves left, since he jumped out at me from behind chairs, couches, cars, or my closet. However, though I was small, I wasn't completely powerless. When I set the table, I always gave him the "fork that didn't taste good."

(#52) Tom and I were visiting Dennis before we were married. It was New Year's Eve, and Dennis had one date during the day, and then a different date that night. Lunch w/one lady and dinner with another.

From Tom Bodziak:

(#53) All of the Buffalo Bills fans in the family were intensely engaged in watching a playoff game against the Miami Dolphins at Doug and Linda's. Suddenly Mother appeared, announced that dinner was ready and promptly turned off the television with two minutes left in the game. Dennis was horrified and reamed his Mother out! Needless to say, the game went back on.

(#54) Once at Keuka Lake, Dennis went to retrieve some leftovers in the fridge and was quite dismayed to find that the plate was ½ covered with cellophane. Being Dennis, he pontificated on the futility of such a system.

From Shannon:

(#55) "what jumps into my head is the camping trip in tents somewhere in the Adirondacks (my mom probably knows specifics) when a bear got into the food that we'd left in our car-top carrier in the middle of a night and (uncle) Denny shined a flashlight on it and shouted "BEAR"!

From Asta, Lowell, Tomi-Ann, and Lisen Roberts:

(#56) It's a Fall or Spring Saturday afternoon at 2C Laing Street. The overhead door to the nonexistent basement garage is open. Too many people. Too much

food. Way too much beer. GSPA. History students. Perhaps even a sociologist. Spouses and kids. Profound discussions about politics, the Bible, sports. And did we mention drinking?

Twass a wonder we survived. But, then, DeLong's and Robertses didn't have to drive. Just pick up before the next party. And clean up the kids so they would be presentable when they arrived at Grandma Scarff's on Monday.

A short but wonderful time for the DeLong's and Robertses at the end of Laing Street in Colonie. Thanks, Dennis, for rescuing us from homelessness.

From Doug:

(#57) another adventure might be last years "dip" in the Junction pool in Roscoe at the old bridge abutment when he fall off the small ledge at the outlet ripples went in a rather deep part (unwitnessed though).....

(#58) there was the time in his "youth" (don't remember exactly the year, although he most probably will be able to) when he foolishly made dates to meet at the property (I believe before the camp was erected) with **two different women.**

From Gay:

(#59) When Doug, Kathy, Dennis and I were first married, we lived together in Grandpa Wackford's cottage on Guilford lake. In the Fall, when the weather started getting cold, Grandpa was worried that the plumbing would freeze and wanted us to find another place to live. When we didn't move fast enough, Grandpa drained the water, winterizing the cottage, and forced us out.

(#60) Dennis played on a McDonough softball team when we were first married, sponsored by Jimmy's Bar, where they hung out after the games.

(#61) Dennis, Doug, Kathy and I went to NYC in 1964 for the World's Fair

From Belle:

(#62) "I remember the first time I met Dennis on our way back from Nova Scotia with Rob, after Rob had ransacked Dennis' place for food and other necessary items on the trip up. I remember how welcome he made me feel (he's always makes me feel that way) and how easy he was/is to be around and with".

(#63) "I remember a time we came to stay and leaving for Hopkins in Baltimore on our way back from Albany. We are almost to the NYC area when Rob realizes he has Dennis' wallet in our car... so we had to extend our stay by turning around and coming back, spending the night and starting back out the next morning".

From Rob:

(#64) "The first memory I have of Dad is driving up this steep hill in Cortland on the way back to our house on a snowy slippery night. From out of nowhere these kids pelted our car with snowballs ... and Dad calmly pulled over ..., chased them down and, gave them holy hell"

(#65) "I also remember when I was 4 or 5 sitting on the toilet watching him shave in his scivvies and hoping I'd grow up to be as muscular and *studley* as he was"

(#66) "I remember our one-on-one mano-y-mano cut throat tennis ball baseball games in the school ball field behind he and Judy's house in Plattsburgh. He would throw knuckle-balls, curve balls, fast balls brush me back and even throw at my head..., in retrospect to toughen me up (which I needed)."

(#67) "I remember not getting picked for the freshman basketball team at Mount Assumption". Coming home deeply disappointed and Dad questioning me for some time, asking about how the try-outs the past couple of days had gone and him becoming more and more ... *perplexed*. The next afternoon at school one of the brothers who taught us (I suspect brother Marcel who always had a bit of a soft spot for me) came to me and let me know I'd made the team after all. To this day I have no idea what Dad did to change that outcome, but suspect this is where the... *fairness bone* and social justice gene that fires so deeply in our own children must come from"

(#68) "A somewhat sad but poignant memory of our time living with he and Judy in Plattsburgh is when Judy went away and he asked me to let Posy, her beloved cat out one morning. They kept the cats tied up on a rope tied to a big tree in the backyard behind the house. Anyway, we both forgot about her and the next morning she went missing, so I opened the back door and to my horror she was hanging about six feet off the ground having wrapped herself around a tall branch and the rope being too short to reach the ground, quite literally hung herself". On and off Judy's S-list at that point anyway (deservedly so in some cases probably) I don't think I got off the her list after that, it being *the straw that broke the camels* (or cat's in this case) back.

(#69) Of course all the time, Dad, Uncle Doug and one of my best friends Bret have spent at the cabin on our land in upstate NY are among the happiest times of my

life. It is there that my bird dogs have flushed and we've all flourished. Our poker games, late night conversations about everything from chics and the joys and many ways of love-making to solving the problems of the world and all the little things that go on there. One example being Dad's famous turnip stew which turns the interior air noxious soon upon its intake and digestion. There is just such a camaraderie, bonding, kinship and even fellowship that goes on there that is hard to put into words... but it is quite probably literally my favorite place to be and when there all seems right with the world. It isn't just the ture pursuit of grouse hunting that I enjoy so much there but this brings me to several funny memories there. One beign one of the first times we were hunting with our first dog Montana (Dad's favorite) and how we trudged the woods for miles looking for the beasts (grouse) prior to Dad's late arrival the next day. On the first hunt out of the blue a grouse flies up into the tree right next to Dad and he yells... "hey there's a grouse in the tree by me should I shoot it"? Uncle Doug, Bret and I yell at him... "Hell Yes!" Afterwards he pockets the bird in his game pouch admiring it's beauty for a minute and then shrugs his shoulders as we walk down the dirt road to the next covert and says something to the effect of, "I don't know why you guys think this is so hard... they fly up in a tree and you shoot 'em... that's all". *I think he has since moved off his square a bit on this.*

(#70) There are many more memories I could share. But one thing I should say in closing since we have now reached 70 memories, is that Dad's always been there for me "when the chips were down". When I needed money in college or after, whenever I was going through a difficult time, at work, or with girls or whatever, he was the first call I'd make. I think that's LOVE. And I hope my children will always feel that way about me, because it's where you need to be as a Dad. That friends aspect... and having someone you can talk to...brings tears to my eyes as this little book comes to an end..... it's huge.

III. Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all those who contributed to this book. Deb, Aunt Nancy, Tom, Michael, Sam, Clare, Belle, Mom (Gay), Andrea, Uncle Doug and Aunt Linda, Lowell and Asta and of course Michael and Pat, without whom writing this wouldn't have been possible. But while these folks definitely have been a special part of Dad's life through this past 70 years there are so many others some of whom I know and some of whom I don't who should have been included if I had been able to get in touch with them and had more time. There are more people than mentioned in this book certainly that have had a huge impact on his life and regrettably I was not able to include everyone. That said, I hope in reading this book Dad you will realize how much you are loved and how much we are the better for having you in our life. Father, grandfather, uncle, brother, husband and friend, thank you for being you.

Addendum

Additions from the Morgan Family:

- James favorite memory of dad was the first time we visited him in CA, we went on bike ride at the beach, played golf, and best of all he beat hime in trivial pursuit, which according to dad at the time, was his first time!!!!
- Jack, when asked about grandpa, said he was nice...I mean really nice...he took us fishing a million times...
- Charlie couldn't come up with much except to second that he liked that grandpa took hime fishing and they caught fishes!!!

Additions from Tami, Dan, Sarah and Danny:

- I was there the night that my mother met Dennis and I liked him from the minute I met him. We have very similar personalities and bonded quickly.
- When Dan and I got engaged, he and my mother were the first people we told. I think Dennis was more excite than mom! Right off the bat, he took an active role and insisted in helping us pay for the wedding. We had only known him for a few years, and we were fully ensconced as a family.

As we all got to know each other, we started making a lot of trips & memories together:

- One memorable trip was to the DeLong hunting cabin. We were whisked off in a Lincoln heading for the great outdoors. Did Dennis think to warn me that it's a hike to get to the cabin? Nope. So he parks the car on this random road and pops the trunk. Now, please keep in mind, I love to camp, and Dan and I camped in very remote places in our time. We slept in tents, bathed in lakes and peed in holes. Granted, Dan and I are very neat and clean, but dirt doesn't bother us. WELL, the cabin (once we finally reached it) was another story. It was night time when we arrived, Dennis made a fire, and we settled down to sleep. It started raining, and I enjoyed the sound of the rain on the roof – until - it started raining on my face. Dennis says I screamed – I don't remember, I just remember thinking that this never happened in a tent. So I moved and got through the rest of the night. The next morning I started puttering around cleaning, and a huge black spider attacked me in the kitchen. That was it, the cabin hates me and the feeling was starting to be mutual.
- I have actually camped with Dennis and mom and for him, it was not a great memory as he has never camped with either one of us again.
- Because of Mr. DeLong, I went to Empire State College and got my Bachelor Degree. I remember feeling a little lost when I was 19 and not sure where to go and what to do. The four of us (Dennis, Mom, Dan and I) went to dinner at a little Italian place in Troy, NY and he and I had a serious conversation. He was so helpful in guiding my thoughts as to what I should do as far a school/work/etc. He strongly pushed a college education –

surprise! Thankfully he did. So I started at a community college and finished at Empire. Unfortunately I got a degree in something I enjoy doing – but the pay is nonexistent.

- I also worked for Empire through my college career and met wonderful people. I never told anyone that he was my step father (and really the only father I ever had) at Empire. It shocked people when they found out and boy, he was a good man to have a connection with. I remember Dennis in his office, all the paperwork, the half door, and he in his blue suits. I always felt proud that I was related to him. It was obvious to me that he was well liked and respected. Not too many people get to see that about their step fathers and it made me respect him even more.
- Dennis has a mischievous side to him and he tried to pull me into his evil web of fun. Early in our relationship, I had not met Rob yet and Dennis had me play a little trick on his son. I called Rob and said that I was from the ASPCA. It was horrible. I can't remember exactly what I said to Rob but it was something to do with animal research and I was to make him feel guilty. I think I only lasted a minute or two with that one.
- There are so many things that when I think of when I think of Dennis. He is warm, funny, outgoing and animated. He calls me just to check in. He sends birthday cards to us, and signs them appropriately. Even my mom can't say that. He got me a card recently for my birthday, he signed it, and so did she. It read: Love, Papa & ~~Deborah~~ Mom. Dennis is always up for fun and doing things. We have taken many a trip as a family. We have been on airplanes, locked in minivans with vomit and crammed in cars. We have shared hotel rooms, bathrooms and many a meal. Thank you for all that and more!

I'm so glad that we can do things like this and continue to add to the memories.