Odyssey of an Oddity

autobiography of brian darrel stubbs

(not always feeling up to being capitalized)

1949 to whenever



Part One: Life—Ready or Not, Here It Comes—Do What You Can

Part Two: Learning to Love Life and Live with the Limp

Part Three: Bearing the Burdens

© 2026 by brian darrel stubbs and his posterity

Acknowledgments

I thank my parents for a good start, for raising me through several years, then worrying about me a few more. I am grateful to my generations of ancestors for persevering through life in order to raise the next generation of my ancestors, generation after generation; otherwise, where would I be? Or any of us? I thank my wife, who has been with me a half-century-plus since we married as 22-year-olds, and to whom my mom said, "You can finish raising him if you want; I tried my best." I thank my posterity for being so much fun to watch growing up and for their goodness. I thank my brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles, other relatives, friends, associates, colleagues, teachers, students, bosses, coaches, doctors, nurses, a few law enforcement officers and strangers for being kind, loving, stern, perturbed, oblivious, attentive, patient or not, reasonable or not, or any combination of the preceding to make life what it has been, as even negative experiences make the positives more appreciated. I appreciate Bryan Crockett, who has printed and published a number of my books and may publish this one too.

Preface

Odyssey of an Oddity (life journey of a weird duck) is in 3 parts. Part One (age 1-43), growing up, learning, running, Army, mission, family, career, research, etc. Part Two (43-73), new perspectives spark a wonderful awakening for enjoying life more—a wonderful 30 years. Part Three (age 73 on), a year-long health woe weakened me and the sorrows and burdens born by wife, children, spouses, grandchildren make it hard to be happier than a saddest child or other family. To watch rumor ruin lives and political parrying persecute the innocent made loving life a lesser priority. Yet the fun, funnies, and goodnesses that God grants well overwhelm and swallow the sorrows eventually made small, but not for a while.

To sticklers on format, relax! For example, the rule that the numbers 1-10 should be spelled out is nonsense. In contrast to seven, 7 is shorter, more instantly recognized, and more easily written and read. Whoever thought up the rule that the numbers 1-10 should be spelled out should remain as mercifully anonymous as whoever invented the tie. Passives and split infinitives are also fine. Contractions are often more natural in telling one's story, and an autobiography is telling one's story. This turning upside down of some writing conventions that deserve to be ignored is only one unusuality among many in this oddity's odyssey. Furthermore, too many books are boring, so if this one is a bit on the fun and entertaining side, enjoy instead of judge. If too juvenile in spots, those may be for young people. If some inclusions seem insignificant to the reader, they were significant enough to me. If too light in spots, skip to what seems suitably heavy. The reader can make his/her own book as otherwise as he/she wishes, but this is my story.

The first draft of this work was written for my grandchildren in 2012, when the older ones were in junior high and starting high school, a stage of life that can be rough at times, so it was written as some reassurance that all is survivable. When times seem tough, do what you can and get through it. Bad days are usually not as bad as they seemed at the time when viewed from a day or decade later. I intentionally made this a little on the fun, entertaining side, so that the grandchildren would read it. It worked. Most of them did read it, my children told me, so no sense in changing it to boring now. A primary purpose of biographies is to learn from each other. Another purpose of this one is as an added witness of God's hand in our lives. Those thinking that we make it all happen ourselves will be greatly surprised to watch the not-so-instant replays in yonder spheres and see God's hand doing many good things for each of us, as we Mr. Magoo-like know-next-to-nothings are helped and narrowly spared more often than we knew. His Hand is often obvious, seeable daily, no need to wait, if we look and realize. Some parts of this life history, like the suicide of our son, are inescapably heavy, though God's hand was with us even more strongly at that time, yet in contrast to the periodic burdens, much of life can be enjoyable, delightful, funny, or pleasant. That more enjoyable portrayal fills the great majority of these pages. So enjoy!

Contents

Part One: Life—Ready or Not, Here It Comes—Do What You Can **1**
For Starters (1949-1955) 1
Hawaii (1955-57) 3
Los Angeles (1957-1960) 4
Pomona, California (1960-1962) 8
The Move to Orem, Utah, and 8th grade (1962-1963) 11
The Move to Provo, and 9th grade (1963-1964) 14
First or Sophomore Year of High School (1964-1965) 15
A Summer on the Farms (1965) 16
Junior Year (1965-1966) 18
Senior Year (1966-1967) 23
Post-High-School Crossroads 26
Army Life (1967-1968) 28
Southwest Indian Mission (1968-1970) 33
A Dear John Letter 38
Coming Home to More Crossroads 41
Decisions, Decisions: The Bicycle Trip (1970) 41
Mexican Water Trading Post (1970-71) 44
Silvia Canelo (1971) 46
Marriage (1971-forever) and BYU (1971-74) and Shana and Joseph's births 49
Charm and Selling 53
1974: Our Move to Blanding 55
1975: a New Year Eve party, German class in a weekend, siblings 55
1976: the Henry Black house 56
1977: Sheila's birth, enjoyed time with the White Mesa Utes 57
1978: Sheila's spinal meningitis and the Brazilian family 57
1979-82: Graduate School Daze at University of Utah and Jessica's birth 59
1982: Back to Blanding 63
1983: Sheila and the Rooster 64
1984: A Performance Not to Be Forgotten—Unfortunately; 66
1985: 100 endowment sessions; a freezing night run; a special perception 69
1986: Hamburgers for Dinner 70
1987: A presentation to several BYU faculty, then Sarah's birth 71
1988: The hunt 72
1989: Joseph's 400m run and a river trip 73
Bill Redd—Friend, Businessman, and County Commissioner 75
1989: Joseph's Death 76
1990: Shana graduates, a rollover accident 83
1991: sharing the controversial research with the top authorities 83
Part Two: Learning to Love Life and Live with the Limp **84**
1992: Roger Williams Wescott; our classless clan; the Stubbs name 84
1993: realizations and Shana's mission 86
1994: Sheila graduates; publications; a 35-mile hike from Blanding to Montezuma Creek 87
1995: Shana married Duane Brown; first article published in IJAL 88
1996: Sheila married Orlo Knight 88
1997: powder-puff star; Bishop Mark Lyman; another misinterpreted social situation 89
1998: another powder-puff star performance; another roll-over accident 90
1999: Jessica graduates, the house that Orlo built, "Banning Boredom and Loving Life" 91
2000: 2nd article in IJAL; 1st edition of *Morsels for the Mind* 92
2001: the 1st musical: *Life with Mr, Jr, and Some Misses of Communication* 92
2002: the 2nd musical: *Paradise Lost or Found?*, two-day hike with Carrolls 94

2003: Community Theater, Jessica's mission, our stolen car 94
2004: the 4th musical: *Mr. Scrumple's Opus*; Joseph visits Aisha 96
2005: *Great! Expectations!* (5th musical) commissioned by Blanding City for its centennial 98
"Learning Styles" 99
"When I Grow Up—and It Could Happen Any Time" and study-hiking 100
A novel? Perhaps a novel novel 102
2006: Sarah graduates; "A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief" 103
2007: Sarah married Joseph Walker; our two bishop friends—Steve Wilcox and Kline Carroll 104
2008: "A Book for the Worst Sellers List" 105
2009: the sixth musical: *Has-beens, Wannabees, and Rather-nots*; YSA branchopric; 107
Morsels for the Mind, 3rd edition and purpose 108
Living to 114 … with Ice Cream! 110
2010: *White Mesa Ute Dictionary*; playing Clem Rogers in *Will Rogers Follies* 110
2011: after 30 years of work, published *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* 112
2012: "The Marathon" and "A Cruise" 113
2013: Teaching went well, student comments 117
2014: Retired at 65 and "brian's obituary" 119
2015: Jessica married Jorma Hayes; a national presentation; after 30 years of work published 124
Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan
2016: Published *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*; moved a mountain 125
2017: Published *Anecdotes as Antidotes to Wrench Us from Our Ruts*; Dad passed on 128
2018: buffet-cation not always good; Mom passed on 131
2019: Uncle Bob's funeral and President Nelson's letter 135
2020: Covid; 2nd edition of *Changes in Languages*; "Answering the Critics in 44 Rebuttal Points"; 136
New Year Resolutions for 2021 143
2021: 50-year anniversary; two more articles; 4th edition of *Morsels for the Mind* 144
2022: Silvia wins to become a San Juan County Commissioner 145
Part Three: Bearing the Burdens **147**
2023: hospitals, pain, appointments and surgery filled 2023; 2nd edition of *Exploring* 147
2024: Fresno, letters to and from Dallin H. Oaks, Don Smith passes, our senior missions, cello, 149
commenting on online debates, a talk on DC 101, education, more flags for football team
Poem: The Setting of Soul and Sun 162
2025: Our Commissioner at work 166
Answering the Critics, highlights and elaborations 187
2026: Commissioner at work; 192
Appendix A: bro bri sayings 208
End of first file; Appendices B through P below are on second file
Appendix B: "Portrait of a Pair" and other writings about my families; Samuel Rose Parkinson; 210
the Stokes and the Stubbs
Appendix C: Reflections, Learn much when young, books, more on Joseph, 213
God's kindnesses and protections, etcetera
Appendix D: What I know from Experience 217
Appendix E: Ancestors 220
Appendix F: Map of Ancestral Homelands 221
Appendix G: Favorite Music 222
Appendix H: Favorite Books 222
Appendix I: Publications 223
Appendix J: Car accidents and close calls 225
Appendix K: Things I am thankful for 228
Appendix L: Life's running & walking mileage 229
Appendix M: Music composed 229
Appendix N: Cousins with the prophets 229
Appendix O: High School memories 230
Appendix P: Photos 234

Part One: Life—Ready or Not, Here It Comes—Do What You Can

For Starters (1949-1955)

Age 63, I was told either to get a biopsy, colonoscopy, etcetera, or to start writing my life history. So I wrote my life history. Most autobiographies are written by persons appearing in *Who's Who*. Less celebrated individuals like myself belong in *Who's He?* Though priorities may lead to neither fame nor fortune, who is to say that the lives of us more menial meanderers through life are less interesting or less beneficial to learn from? Among politicians, manufacturers and farmers, the former make names for themselves while the latter two make what we need and can balance a budget. Whether one's name is known by nations or neighbors is not so much a matter of greatness or intelligence as it is simply a matter of direction, misdirection, occupation, or bad luck. By bad luck I mean that judging by the number of perfectly normal lives later ruined by luck in the lottery or other luxurious living, the misfortune of fortunes must be a terrible burden. I am glad I have had to work and struggle through life … I think. In any case, I am limited to myself as sole subject for whom I can write an autobiography.

We should want to learn from each other's romps through the China-shop of life, so that we do not have to do as well at breaking irreplaceables, making messes, hurting people, and being the lucky winner of debts to pay. We spend chunks of life in recovery from error and returning from roads whose forks and misleading signs we come to know better than and should warn others of. That is why we should share information. Anyone knows to consult a map or to ask the informed which road leads to where! But just like a man, some of us want to figure it out ourselves, which might be good, okay, or survivable, or might be a waste of time, costly, or dangerous. Life is too short to spend too much of it learning from mistakes. We do not have time to make all the mistakes ourselves, though some give it a good try. So for my posterity and whoever else cares to read, I lay out the lumps, laughs, and lessons of my life.

I considered a few titles: *Bio-Bumps of a Charm-Challenged Chap*; or *Learning from the Lessons of His Life without Having to Live It—What a Deal!*; or *Memoirs of an Intermittent Memory*; or *The bro bri brag-a-thon*; or *Learning to Love Life and Live with the Limp*, later the title of part two, as both are important to learn, and I finally figured out how to do them. Most of us know seasons of dragging through one day after another, not overly thrilled with life, but generally preferring it to the alternative, except when in doubt during dips into depression, which are dispersible with certain perspectives. Acquainted with lows, I finally emerged with a collection of realizations that put me as one of the happiest guys on the planet. As for the limp, I do not have one at the moment, but as a runner, then jogger, then walker (we'll call it progress), I have gotten over many temporary limps, but even if not, life has given each of us a package of limp-like limitations from all that we thought we wanted until we know better, because there is more to enjoy than we can fit into a lifetime anyway, if we would just realize it and start enjoying (See "Banning Boredom and Loving Life" in *Morsels*). Regardless our package of limitations, so many joys and enjoyments are freely available that wasting time being miserable or wishing for what's not is silly.

I finally settled on *Odyssey of an Oddity* (journey of a weird duck), which may best describe this linguist's life laden with unusualities, seldom intended. Most do life in the box, some think outside the box, while some never knew there was a box. Yet I would not trade my life for anyone else's.

My father, Darrel William Stubbs, served in WWII, came home in 1945, met Eva Stokes in the BYU orchestra, and they married in the Logan Temple July 1946. I was born 3 years later in Rochester, New York, April 1949, while my father was attending the Eastman School of Music enroute to becoming a professional oboist. My dad next taught oboe at Indiana University while earning a master's degree.

I don't remember it, but Mom later told me that when I was 2 or 3, Dad was gone several days, and I missed him. When he came home, I wrapped my arms around his neck and cried and would not let go for a long time. I liked and missed my Dad.

My own first memories were in a rented farmhouse on Hard Strait Road near Bloomington, IN. I do not remember neighbors nearby, only endless fields and trees as far as a 3-year-old's eyes could see.

One time my father took me to an auction. My 3-year-old attention span had drifted, but Dad redirected my attention toward the auctioneer's stage and asked if I would like a little black puppy that was being auctioned off. What else would a 3-year-old say? We brought little "Inky" home.

Inky grew faster than I did. He became an adult, while I remained 3 years old. Nevertheless, that dog was my companion and playmate. Eric was still crawling and not much of a playmate yet, though that would change soon enough. I followed Inky wherever he went—through the fields and woods, under fences, and then always back home, fortunately. A time or two I lost track of the dog and didn't know where to go. I would simply stand still, look around awhile, and Inky would eventually reappear, bounding back to me, to show me the way home. As I think back on it, that dog was looking out for me, besides enjoying the walks and explorations he initiated. One morning Inky did not come when I called. My parents helped look too, but we never saw Inky again. He was gone. My first loss of a loved one.

I remember Aunt Edie (a teen at the time) came to live with us awhile. She was nice, then and always, and neither she nor Mom got after us that I can remember, so I assume we were nice too. And fallible memories are quite helpful in the writing process of a life history. Eric started walking and replaced Inky as my best friend. Not a nicer, kinder, more honorable fellow in the world than Eric.

I was 5 when we moved to Hoosier Courts of university housing. Dan Ludlow and his family were our neighbors there. His working on a degree enroute to becoming an eminent BYU scholar overlapped our sojourn at Indiana University, and the pair of parents became life-long friends. We children got along too, but did not know what a life-long friend was yet. Their son, Victor Ludlow, became a Hebrew and Isaiah specialist at BYU, but at this time, he was our babysitter, age 12, when we were 5, 3, and 1.



At left, Christmas 1954: Dad 29, Mom 27, Eric 3, Rita 1, Brian 5.

I remember I liked Diane Ludlow, a year older than me, the first of several secret loves who had no trouble remaining oblivious of my existence. One time she and her girlfriends were playing and built a house of cardboard and such playground materials as they could find. We little boys watched awhile, curiously observing their construction techniques and being amazed that it stood when complete. Sadly, what happened next was my idea: "Let's run by and knock the house down." My two co-conspirators' enthusiastic responses were as stupid as my idea, but my stupid idea being received so well was encouraging. So we ran by and pushed it down. The girls were predictably put out at us and sad. As I looked (from a safe distance) at the collapsed house and their unhappiness, I was trying to remember what made that seem like a good idea. It was not, of course, but was a really dumb thing to do. I decided that there is no fun in making people feel bad (1st lesson learned), and decided at age 5 not to make people feel bad any more, not intentionally. I still clumsily bungle my way into hurting people's feelings unintentionally from time to time, but not intentionally. Hopefully even the unintentionals decrease in frequency as I learn to be more wise, as gradual or imperceptible as that progress may seem. I have found that just keeping my mouth shut works well much of the time. Other times I can even get in trouble for not saying what others thought I should have said. So the probability of pleasing everyone all the time is zilch, but I keep trying. That is another reason I like being alone in the mountains. My social skills attain perfection when alone in the mountains. It is so exhilarating to come back from a hike in the pines, having lived a perfect life for 8 hours.

Hawaii (1955-1957)

When I was 6 years old, Dad was hired to teach music at the University of Hawaii, and we flew to Honolulu. Some excitedly ask what it was like living in Hawaii, but my answer invariably disappoints. At ages 6 to 8, hula girls and island lore were not my focus. I remember best the big tree with 3 tree houses, fields of 6-foot Napier grass through which we ran and played hide-and-seek, and other assorted matters of interest to a kid my age. Hawaii had no snakes, but did have large spiders. Occasionally, large black and yellow spiders would make their webs across our hide-and-seek trails, and as we ran through the Napier grass, only good brakes kept us from plowing into a web with a big spider in the middle.

We moved 3 times during my first 6 weeks of 1st grade, so I attended 3 different elementary schools. Those first days of adjustment to this new thing called school left this shy kid something of an uptight bundle of nerves those first weeks in 1st grade. One episode remains vivid in my mind. As I walked to school one day, my lunchbox fell open while walking up a steep hill. My apple fell out and rolled down the steep hill, faster and faster. I could not catch it. I panicked and cried as I chased my apple down the hill. For some reason, my lunch, secure in my lunchbox, seemed to be the only sure thing in life at the time; and seeing my apple running away from me struck me as a shattering of last sureness.

I had almost forgotten the experience until a flashback decades later. One difficult day, I was walking home, carrying groceries from the store, burdened in heart and cargo. Our only car was not functioning. We had no money to fix it. The remains of $8,000 of medical bills hung over our heads from the birth of our youngest. (In 1988 that was a lot of money.) Other financial and life complexities combined to weigh me down that afternoon. With our last dollars, I walked to the store, bought a gallon of milk, a loaf of bread, and a sack of potatoes. I carried the potato sack on my shoulder with one hand and carried the milk and bread in the other hand. As I walked home, the tied end of the potato sack loosened and potatoes spilled out of the sack onto the pavement and rolled down the street. It was similar enough to relive the first-grade flashback. It was not the potatoes falling from the sack, nor the medical bills, nor the other bills, nor the kaput car to put us afoot, nor the bleak prospect of the potatoes being the family's food supply until the next paycheck. But all combined to re-create the feelings of that little boy again, overcome with sadness, dripping tears in the street, regathering the scant provisional security that this provider could provide at the time, and weeping that I could not do better for those whom I loved. I wept, thinking of my wife and 5 children, infant to high schooler. I would bear whatever for their good; my life was theirs and of no value to me except in providing for their needs, security, and happiness.

I felt better afterwards. Everyone needs a good cry once in a while, a bitter-sweet experience that nourishes the soul in ways that continual good fortune cannot. One thing I did learn through the first 3 schools of first grade was to do one's best and respect would materialize. Being a decent athlete helped. Why athleticism is often more readily noticed than simply being kind and reasonable is a mystery, but I am only an observer of life, not a molder of much, yet in a few circles, kindness trumps prowess.

From inside the Hawaii apartment, Dad once overheard a playground conversation that he enjoyed for years afterwards. Eric, who was only four or five at the time, had learned to count to 1,000. I listened to him do it once. Outside among friends, Eric's counting ability became a topic of discussion and one of the boys asked Eric, "So what comes after 999?"

Eric thought a moment and then said, "Well, I have to start from the beginning: 1, 2, 3."

"Never mind," said the other boy.

In contrast to Eric's intellectual achievements, bro bri could fall on his face whenever he wanted. At 6 or 7, I could stand at attention, slowly fall forward, and crash to the ground on my stomach and chest without putting my hands in front to break the fall. No one else could do it or could not keep from breaking their fall at the last moment. All were amazed and liked to watch it, and guess who was willing to do it whenever they asked. When someone new came by, the neighborhood boys would volunteer my performances. "Watch this! Go ahead, Brian. Show 'em." And I would crash before their eyes—usually

twice since they could not believe their eyes the first time. Tough tummy muscles and turning my head to the side, so that tummy and chest hit instead of nose, were important. But as I grew older, bigger, and taller, the increasing height of the fall, impact, and discomfort helped me outgrow that "talent" by age 8.



First-grade class in Hawaii. bro bri is top row 3rd from left with tilted head.

Many girls wore shoes, especially on picture day, but nearly all the boys went barefoot to school in Hawaii. We wore shoes only to church on Sundays. Not until adolescence did shoes become the "in-thing." I liked doing life in bare feet, but once when swinging on the big tree's rope and dragging my feet for brakes, I caught a long nail an inch into the arch of my foot. It **HURT!** I hobbled home vocalizing exactly how I felt, but my Dad pulled it out, washed my foot, etc.

I turned 8 and was baptized in Hawaii. The frogs had to be chased out of the outdoor baptismal font before Dad and I walked down into the water. I remember watching the ocean on the jet flight home. Mom says at end of the 6-hour flight from Hawaii to LA, a passenger behind us said that we were the best behaved children he had ever seen (8, 6, 4, and newborn), evidence that we were good some days.

Los Angeles (1957-1960)

We left Hawaii in 1957 for the University of Southern California (USC) where Dad began a Doctorate of Musical Arts (DMA). He sometimes referred to it as his DAM DMA. We first lived in the Watts area of Los Angeles, 4 blocks from the Coliseum. Living in the inner city was tense for me. I hardly dared leave the yard. One venture away from the house thoroughly reinforced all my fears.

I was in 3rd grade, my brother Eric in 1st. We were walking down the street with another pair of brothers in 3rd and 5th grades. A group of 6 or 8 Black high school boys came toward us. They stopped us and took turns hitting the 5th grader in the mouth. They would feign compassion while looking at his mouth, saying things like, "Oh, we're sorry. We didn't mean to hurt you," then they would smash him in the mouth again. One of their group was decent enough to try to convince the others to leave us alone, which they eventually did. The other three of us 1st and 3rd graders were helpless against the gang and could only watch, hoping their amusements would not extend to us. I have reflected on that in the years since: Did they think they were proving to each other how tough they were by collectively beating up a 5th

grader half the size of any one of them? Was that their entertainment—bloodying up the mouth of an innocent, smaller passer-by? How sick is such brutality on the innocent!

We soon moved to a safer neighborhood—1308 West 90th street—where Eric and I attended 95th Street Elementary School, 3rd through 5th grades for me. Eric and I enjoyed some good friends and good times then. Upon receiving 25¢ allowance each Saturday for doing our chores, we walked to the corner store. I bought black licorice, baseball cards with bubble gum, etc. Eric liked largely the same, but as he looked at each item, he often said things like, "If it was 3¢, I'd buy it, but it's not worth 5¢." He walked around looking, but thought it all over priced, and at times ended up buying little or nothing, while I always spent my wad. During our walks home, I enjoyed my goodies while Eric looked on with his quarter sometimes still in his pocket. Sometimes I would feel sorry for him and share my munchies with him. But other times, I would tell him he had his own money and should buy some if he wanted some. I am a pretty decent tightwad myself, just ask my wife and kids, but Eric's frugality made me look like a spendthrift. With extraordinary self-discipline, he simply decided what seemed a fair price or not, then followed through. But me? With jingle in the pocket and goodies in the grocer, a munching I would go.

In L.A., I remember trying to beat Eric to sleep. We would both jump in bed the same time, I in the top bunk and Eric below. Within seconds Eric was gone. All his life he amazed people at how instantly he could fall asleep. I would dive in bed, lay perfectly still, try to keep my mind as blank as possible to improve my probabilities, but before I knew it, I could hear Eric snoring. He did not really snore at that age, but I could hear his breathing change, so I would look down and sure enough: he beat me again. I soon outgrew caring, and was happy for him in his quick-sleep ability when the poor guy gets a chance, especially through his life's health problems following a foot infection from a cattle wagon splinter. Learning to be happy for others' happiness multiplies our own (2nd lesson learned).

Dad was good about taking time to spend with us kids here and there, in spite of a busy schedule of a full-time milkman job starting at 3 a.m. each morning and working on a doctorate. He once drove Eric and me (2nd and 4th grades) to a park to play baseball, a park we had never been to before. There was no field near our house, and we had already proven that playing baseball in our neighborhood of close-knit houses put all windows at risk. At the park was a baseball diamond, so the three of us took turns pitching, batting, and fielding. Soon another boy came along, older than us, but a good kid, and Dad invited him to play with us. That helped in the rotation, putting 3 in the field. Then came a large group of maybe 25 Black boys, ages elementary to high school kids, some of them bigger than my Dad. They strutted onto the field, took over the bases, and with foul mouths and an attitude of bullying intimidation, said, "This is our field."

"Do you have a practice scheduled here?" my dad asked sincerely, thinking maybe they did.

"No, but it's our field."

"It's a public park. How can it be your field?" Dad asked.

"It just is."

"I don't think so," said Dad, "but you're welcome to play with us."

They did not like that idea. They figured it was their park, and tried to make us feel unwelcome. Eric and I and the other boy felt unwelcome and would have been happy to leave and let them have the field, but Dad was not going to let them do that, and continued suggesting, "Let's divide up into teams and play ball." Finally, they reluctantly divided teams, including us, and we started a game. They had the foulest mouths; every other word was the worst. Some cheated blatantly or argued over trivial things. It was verbal abuse more than baseball. After an inning or two, Dad said something like, "Well, we gotta go. You boys will have to play without us."

They cheered and tossed a few more obscenities. I was just glad to be getting out of there alive, but as we walked away, Eric said, "Dad, I can't find my mitt." Eric knew where he had set it when he batted, but it was not there afterwards. I thought, "O great, we're gonna die trying to find Eric's mitt."

To Dad's credit and courage, he was going to find Eric's baseball glove, though I was willing to save my allowance for two years and buy him one. The group had gathered up some things into a big

duffle bag and were leaving. So it was apparent that they did not want to play ball; they just wanted to drive us off "their" field. Not seeing the mitt on the ground, Dad asked, "Can we look in the bag?"

"No," said the one carrying it and a few others surrounding it.

By this time Dad's patience was dissipating. He had done really well for a long time. He pushed his way through the circle surrounding the bag and grabbed the bag, saying, "We need to check the bag." Amidst their protests, Dad pulled a mitt out of the bag, holding it up toward Eric, "Is this it?"

"No," Eric answered.

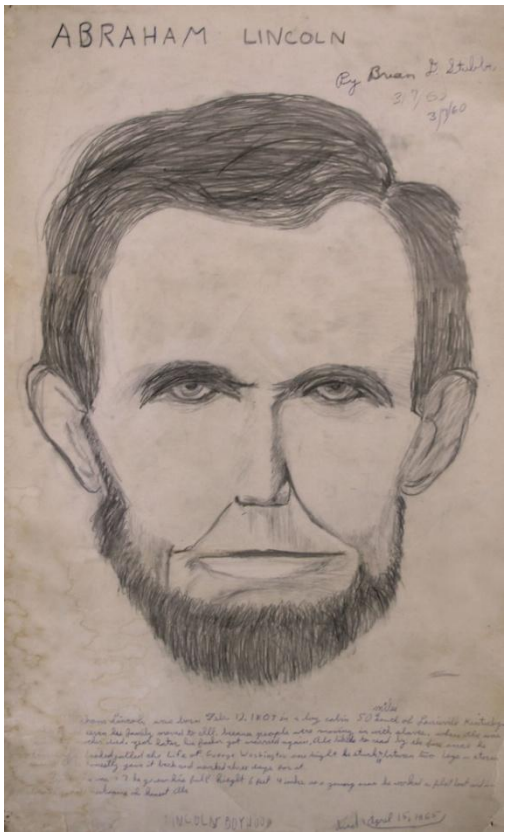
Dad dropped it on the ground, pulled out another, "This?"

"No," Eric said again.

I was sure we were going to get killed. We were outnumbered 25 to 3 and some were teens bigger than my dad. Nevertheless, about the 4th mitt, Eric said, "yes, that's it." What a relief!

Dad handed it to Eric, gave them the bag back, and we walked away with obscenities hurled at us until a ways away. We walked a ways without looking back. I finally looked back (I like salt), and realized the other white kid who came to play with us at first, did not walk away with us, and was on his own going another direction. The gang started chasing him, throwing bats and baseballs at him. He outran them, came toward us, walked with us only a little, then later turned toward his house, I assume. Rough neighborhoods! I was so happy to leave Los Angeles when we did.

Fourth grade interests were astronomy, high jumping, and baseball cards. I had the details of all the planets written in a notebook that I carried around and memorized much.



In fifth grade I admired Abraham Lincoln, memorized the Gettysburg Address, and drew a picture of Lincoln while looking at an encyclopedia picture of him.

When young, I had an appetite that was a marvel to many, but an eventual death sentence if not decreased. So I have tried cutting back, with limited success. When on buffet-cation, I try for a limit of 3 plates from the once-upon-a-time 6 to 8. My mother says that at a few months, when most infants were still on milk, I began crying a lot. The doctor said that I may simply need more to eat, things that would "stick to my ribs." So they started me on cereal, etc, and sure enough, I quit crying.

One time we were visiting our cousins in Utah, Uncle Orlin Stubbs and Aunt Norma's family. I was about 10. My Aunt Norma made the most delicious apricot marmalade. Everyone else had finished breakfast and had left the kitchen, but my cousin Russell and I continued eating toast with apricot marmalade, each having one piece of each pair as it popped up, until after a while, he quit eating and only talked as I continued eating both pieces of each pair toasted. After a while he asked me: "Do you know how many pieces of toast you've eaten?"

It had never occurred to me to count. Unbeknownst to me, he had been counting and trying to keep up with me and continued to keep count for me after he gave up. I thought our conversation was the focus of attention, and that we were only eating toast because it was there—the same reason people climb Everest. Hardly aware that he had stopped eating, I asked, "No, how many?"

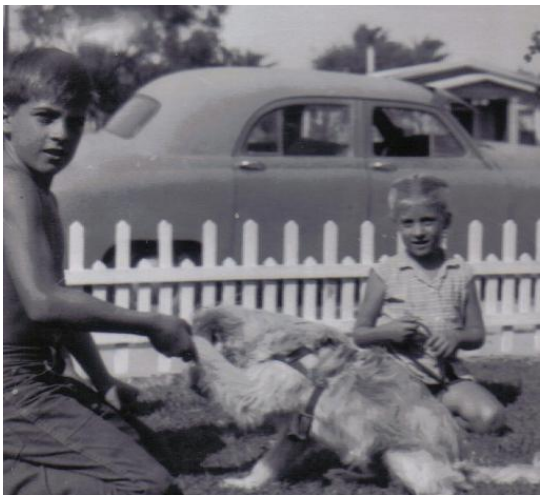
"Thirty-two," he said.

My intuition told me that breakfast was over. With no more hint than that, I folded in what was left of the 2nd or 3rd loaf of bread (must have been thin slices) and said, "Okay, we can go play now."

Every time I tie a square knot, I think of my Uncle Merlin, Dad's older brother, who stayed with us awhile in LA. He was quiet, humble, stayed out of the way, suffered from poor health all his life since childhood, and died at 53 (picture on next-to-last page). He was very thin, kind, soft-spoken, but could walk fast and walked almost everywhere, never owned a car. He taught me how to tie a square knot in some useful context that I do not remember. As I look back, I wish I had taken the initiative to associate with my Uncle Merlin, talk with him some, but I was 10, a natural loner myself, and he was old (late 30s) in the eyes of a 10-year-old. I did not even initiate talks with my parents very often or any adults.

Eric and I often went to Charles Scholes' house, and the 3 of us played tag with his dog. In the backyard were a shed, a dog house, a swing set and something else, all of which we could climb onto and be out of reach of the dog. The dog was friendly, but once tag was underway, he'd go for our pant legs and if he caught us, he'd just shake our leg and drag us some, with playful growl. We'd each start on one of the outbuildings (safe places), and try to time our run to another safe place without getting caught. We succeeded ¾ the time, but often enough the dog did catch us, shake us, but then let go when we pet him.

Between that game and playing marbles on our knees and tackle football, we went through blue jeans faster than most moms thought possible. Poor Mom was often putting patches on the knees.



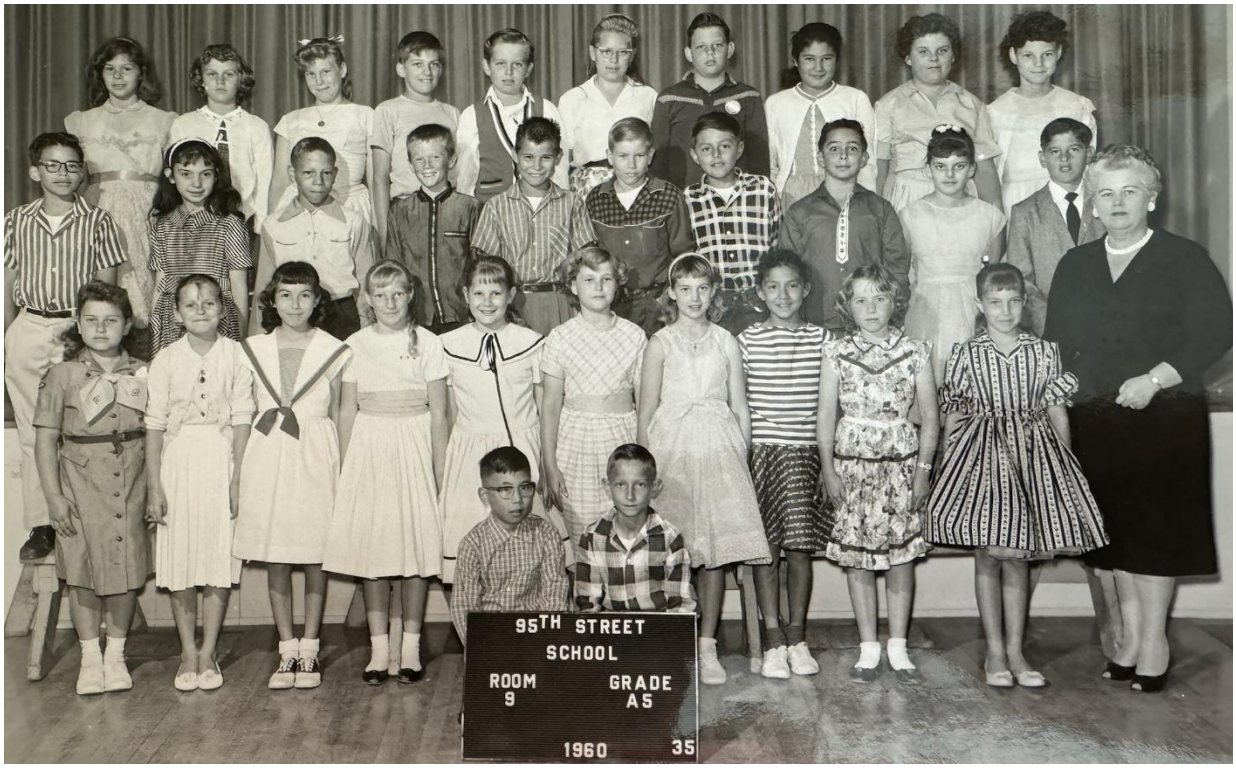
Brian 10, Rita 6, with dog Rex, whom we taught to shake, ca 1959, 1308 West 90th Street, LA



Carrie 8 and Rita 15 helping in the kitchen themselves … or helping themselves in the kitchen. 1968

I was an active youngster, wearing casts on my arms 2 or 3 times in elementary school. The summer after 3rd grade we built some high jump standards, got a straight bamboo stick for a cross-bar, and an old mattress for a landing pit. Eric and other neighbor boys jumped at times, but I practiced hours a day all summer for 3 summers. When young, I did summers without a shirt and one can see (upper left) that I tanned like a Native, but outgrew that habit by early teens, and probably should have sooner, since that great tan only turned into moles and a hairy back later.

In LA, Dad took Eric and me to LA Dodgers baseball games now and then, which was a treat and a pleasant memory, watching shortstop speedster Maury Wills steal bases, outfielder Duke Snider hit homeruns and RBIs, and Sandy Koufax pitch. Eric and I should have kept our baseball card collections as they would have been worth a lot of money decades later, but sometimes we get smart too late.



In fifth grade I had some good friends: Greg Isabel, Michael Okajima (left one of the two in front), Charles Scholes (middle row, 5th from right, western-ish shirt), and Bill Williams (middle row, 3rd from the left). Bill was a Black boy, even more shy than I was, and was the gentlest, kindest, most likable guy. I wish I had kept in contact with those friends over the years, but the years and the busy of life have left me no idea where they might be now. Greg Isabel lived across the street but went to a private school. I'm top row 4th from left. The summer after 5th grade, we moved east of LA to Pomona, CA.

Pomona, California (1960-1962)

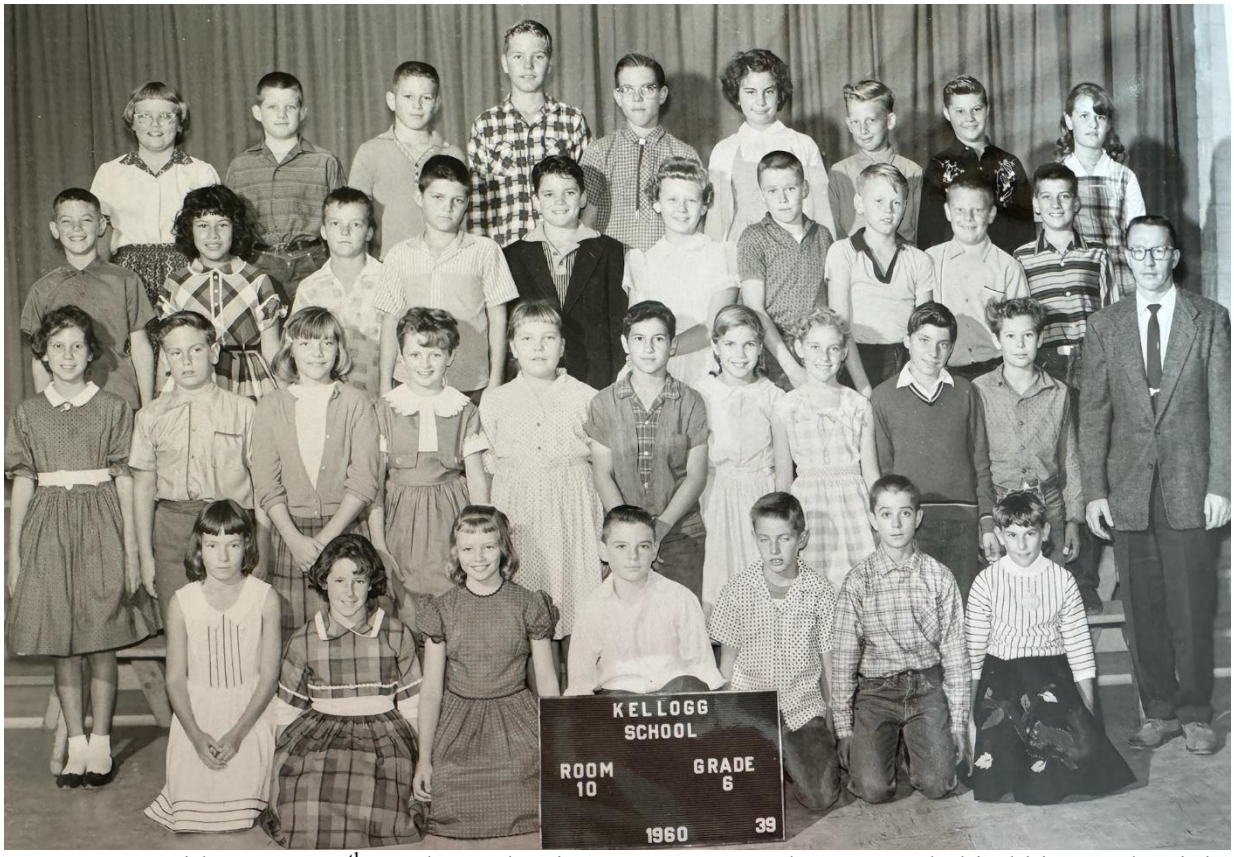
Sixth grade I attended Kellogg Elementary School in Pomona. When I was in 6th grade and Eric in 4th, we played a lot of football with groups of kids on the school field. Eric became the shiftiest runner I ever saw. I was slightly faster than Eric, but he could dart on a dime and change direction 5 times in a second. I watched it happen to others. Eric would be running at whomever, dart left, then right, left, right, until the opponent's legs were suitably tangled, and as the intending tackler fell in seeming slow motion with legs tied in knots, Eric would simply run around him. I figure he owed it all to me. Since I was faster, he had to develop a method of evading me. And since I was often chasing him for one reason or other, he became a master at shifty running, and all because of me. You're welcome, Eric.

In our playground group was the fastest kid in the school, who could barely beat me in a 50-yard dash, but in a football game, I had no trouble catching him from behind or running away from him if I had the ball. So officially he was the fastest in the school, but in a game, I was faster.

Parents started me on cello lessons in 6th grade; I practiced regularly in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.

Part of our 6th-grade curriculum was square dancing some Friday afternoons. I thought if I had to square dance, I might as well dance with someone I kind of liked, so I chose the one I liked, and she chose me when it was girl's choice too, yet we hardly spoke to each other otherwise. A silent relationship, suppressed by the shyness of youth ... or was it still childhood? Where were we? What a severe responsibility nature puts on 6th and 7th graders! Some of the 6th graders thought they were adults, while other 6th graders were afraid they might be some day. Most adults saw us as children, yet to 4th graders we were nearly adults—on our way to high school, to life as it was meant to be! Yeah, right.

We spend each phase of life looking forward to the next, neglecting to enjoy or value the present. Preschoolers cannot wait until they go to school. School children cannot wait until summer when they are out of school, or cannot wait for junior high when life really begins. High schoolers assume that life really begins when out of high school. Those out of high school think marriage will mean an end to their problems, but as they saying goes, they know not which end. The mother with toddlers in diapers longs for the day when the little ones will be out of diapers, while the mother of teenagers reflects how secure life was when they were toddlers and could be wrapped in arms, loved, cuddled and put to bed, and the parents always knew where they were. Those in college dream of a real job someday and the beginning of a career. Those in their careers dream of retirement. Those in retirement wish that their parts did not hurt and that everything worked like it used to. Only those near the end of life are in no hurry for the next step … sometimes. I did eventually learn to simply enjoy wherever I was in life (3rd lesson learned).



Mr Monteith was our 6th-grade teacher in Pomona, a good man. I'm behind him, at the right end of row 3. Michael Stearns with dark jacket, middle of 3rd row, was the presumed fastest in the school, except for you-know-who when playing football. Kathy Patterson, kneeling at left end of the first row, is the girl I picked to square-dance most often. Next to her is Karen, the only other name I remember of that class.

Seventh grade happened at Marshal Junior High in Pomona. The dawn of adolescence did not cast me as rebellious. In fact, my mother says that all three of us boys were quite pleasant and enjoyable as teenagers, though she often wondered if she would survive our 10 and 11-year-old stages just before adolescence. However, one episode had at least one adult thinking that I was an awful, good-for-nothing kid. Miss Black was my seventh-grade Social Studies teacher at Marshall Junior High. I even liked her, a young teacher who was nice and looked a little like Barbara Streisand.

I was sitting in class one day, paying attention part of the time, when a card came around that every member of the class was to sign. I remember seeing the teacher hold up the card and saying something about this former classmate who had moved, so I assumed we were all sending her a nice 'we-

miss-you' card. I figured Benjamin Franklin missed her about as much as I did, so I signed his name. Stupid, yes, but the full impact was yet to descend upon me.

That night Mom informed me that the teacher had called. (The teacher would not speak to me herself, in fact, never spoke to me, looked at me, or acknowledged my presence the rest of the school year.) Indeed, the girl had moved, but she moved because her father had died. Somehow I missed that detail. It was a sympathy card that the teacher intended to send from the class.

I did feel bad. Mom called the teacher and tried to explain that I did not know that the girl's father had died, but the teacher would not believe her nor anyone else. I was the lowest, in her opinion. I learned the lesson (4th) just to do what I was supposed to, stop the stupid stunts, and resume being a good kid. It is about the only stupid stunt I tried, but it stung plenty.

Years later as an adult, I thought about trying to locate Miss Black and apologize and see if she would forgive me. If she were nearby, I would, but wherever she might be by now—perhaps in a different state, perhaps married with a different name, perhaps deceased—finding a former teacher, originally two states away, might be impossible and perhaps a long trip for nothing. She might not remember me. Or if she did, that might be worse. So I figure in the next life, I will find her and try to make amends with both her and the girl. I am guessing that is one of the things we will all be doing among post-mortal projects, so it is good to keep such needed amends to a minimum (5th lesson learned).

During my 7th grade year, my father, 36 at the time, was called to be bishop of our Pomona ward. I was a 12-year-old deacon on the front row, watching it all happen that February sacrament meeting. The outgoing bishop was tall, perhaps 6' 3". My dad was 5'7" and told the congregation, "You're losing about a foot of bishop." They enjoyed a good laugh. It was apparent that Dad felt humble and overwhelmed, as most do who are called to such positions. He was semi-active as a youth, yet made up his mind when he married Mom in the temple, that he would try to do what the Lord wanted him to do all his life, and he did that! He may not be perfect, as none of us are, but his strengths far outweigh all else. He is honest, a person of integrity, a hard worker, generous, has a big heart, and would give you anything you really need, if he has it. Dad periodically got after me as a child, often deserved. I never intentionally made Eric cry, but I was 2 years older and bigger, so while wrestling or whatever, Eric sometimes ended up crying, and I ended up in trouble. But after I was 12 and Dad a bishop, he never got after me again, but treated me more like a peer—compliments and asking my opinion as often as telling me what to do. He is one of the hardest workers I know. Whether physical work in the yard or on the farm, or working two full-time jobs much of his life, both teaching at BYU and playing in the Utah Symphony from 7 a.m. until midnight many days, Dad was a durable doer. I have always admired my dad as a good and self-made man. Though it was a long hard road, from a boy milking cows by hand on his dad's dairy farms, he became one of the best oboists in the nation because he wanted to be, and got a doctorate in music, and figured out how to earn a good living as either a university professor or as a professional oboist—did both—when many told him he could not earn a living as a musician.

As for Mom, she is Supermom—not Superwoman, but Supermom. She is not into impressing people, could not care less about keeping up with any Joneses, avoids unnecessary projects, and likes to rest when she is tired, instead of doing a lot of things that other people seem "obligated" to do. Good for her! Wanting to rest when tired—that is where I get it from. But when it came to being a mom, she was the best: patient, a natural child psychologist, loved her kids and was always there—mostly to listen. No formal lectures, just a word tossed in here and there when useful. The time(s) that I remember her yelling at us could be counted on half a hand. She could be upset at us, occasionally stern and firm, but never explosive, and even the stern and firm were months apart. Her nature was always genuine, "without guile" as Dad often said, and was pleasant, cool, calm, and … well, maybe not collected as in always having everything completely under control or all figured out all the time, but collected in the sense of continuing to work at collecting until it worked out, was too late, obsolete, or beyond her control, at which point she sighed a sigh of relief that it worked out, was too late, or no longer applicable. Simple common sense, kindness, and an easy-going live-and-let-live approach to life were her style.

"So how did two such extraordinary parents end up with me?" you ask. Not all of life's mysteries have answers yet, but their next 4 kids—Eric, Rita, Alan, and Carrie—were good, down-to-earth, pleasant, kind, and such likable people. I have as wonderful a set of siblings as any on the planet, but turning back to me, since this is my autobiography—

Not long after Benjamin Franklin signed our classmate's sympathy card, I read 2 or 3 books on Geronimo, the Apache warrior. At 12, I was much impressed with what I read. His military genius is legend, his endurance near superhuman. Once as a youth in training, rounding a curve on a mountain trail, he was attacked by a mountain lion. Slashing with his knife as the lion tore with claws and teeth, they both rolled down the embankment below the trail. When the dust cleared, the other boys saw Geronimo stand up and the lion dead. He also had premonitions from time to time: one was that white man's bullets would never kill him. His body at death had an unbelievable number of bullet wounds (sources range from 50 to 100 or more). Softened by reservation life in old age, he later died of pneumonia at 80, after lying drunk in the rain one night. The books told of how he could run 7 miles when 7 years old, 50 miles when 13 years old, and 300 miles over 3 days by 18.

So at 13, the summer after 7th grade, I decided to try distance running. I thought anything less than 2 miles would be wimpy, so I ran 2 miles, and it about killed me. Two days later I did it again, and it was not so bad. The 3rd time actually felt good. From then on, running became a habit for life.

Before leaving Pomona, I must mention wonderful Hal Barrus, our scoutmaster from Grantsville, UT. He was kind, wise, and cared about us. Scouting was okay; I loved the outdoors, but the CA scout camp rules forbidding me to run the quarter-mile from the camp to the lake or back because of heat-stroke risk seemed sissified. Two years later, I'd run 8-miles in the morning, then pack for the troop's 5-mile hike that took the rest of the day. I lost interest. But Hal Barrus was a highlight in my life.

The Move to Orem, Utah (1962)

Eighth grade happened in Utah. Dad was hired onto the BYU music faculty and we moved from CA to UT shortly before school, in August 1962, renting a house at 730 N. 120 E. in Orem. Still mostly rural then, Orem was not the populous metropolis that Utah Valley is today. I loved it—fruit orchards, farms, fields for running, mountains for hiking, and being able to walk down any street I wanted to, without having to worry about getting beat up. In my 5th grade school, fights were common, and I had to defend myself 3 or 4 times, but in Utah, I never had to fight again.

After running 2 miles a day that last summer in Pomona, I increased to 4 miles a day in 8th grade. In winter, however, the snow was too deep to run in the field, and I did not want to run on the streets in daylight. That was before running was common and many who saw me running down a street assumed it was an emergency and would stop and offer a ride. So I would get up at 5 a.m., cut a square top out of a small loaf of Mom's homemade wheat bread, pour some honey in it, put the bread lid back in place, put the small loaf in a sack, then run the two miles from home to Lincoln Junior High School on 800 south while it was still dark so that I would not be seen running. By lunch time the honey had permeated the loaf and the small delicious honeyed loaf was my lunch … with water.

I really liked Utah: running in the hills, hiking in the mountains, and kinder people. Big-city people would ask, "In the city we have lots of things to do—action, cars, stores, lights, movies. What do you do in the country?" But I don't care for cars, lights, or movies. I would rather hike or run than ride in a car, and prefer mountains to movies. Weird? I won't argue whatever label, but I liked the pleasant rural life in Utah. Utah Valley is hardly rural now, but then, horses, orchards, and farms were plentiful.

As for grades, I usually did well enough—mostly A's and B's. Notable exceptions were two D's, one from Benjamin Franklin's Social Studies teacher in 7th grade and the other in 8th-grade wood shop. I do not know what I did to deserve a D in shop—evidently not enough, the teacher must have thought. Or maybe the birdhouse that I built did not compare with the gun cabinets, desks, armoires, and cedar chests that some other boys made. But it was a nice birdhouse; and the generations of birds that lived in the free

bed & breakfast resort liked it. I was not told that grades depend on size of project. The good news on unfair teachers is that they are temporary. After the class, they become past tense. We become and learn as much as we want in what we want, whether in school or out, the rest of our opportunity-filled futures.

My 8th-grade history teacher gave me a C first term. Dad asked me about it. I explained that I always did all the assignments, etc. Dad gave me some interesting advice. He told me that teachers are not always objective, but are subconsciously influenced by their perceptions of a student, and since I was the quiet type, teachers hardly knew I existed (except Ben Franklin's teacher, who despised me). I was easily overlooked or did not register either favorably or unfavorably in most minds. How flattering is that? Yet true, I would soon find out. Maybe that explained the underwhelming notice from girls too. Dad told me that if I would go ask the teacher what I needed to do to improve my grade, then the teacher would know who I was, that I was concerned, and then my grade would probably improve. Dad was right! I did as he said, and though I did nothing different academically—simply continued doing all the assignments—I received a B+ at the end of the next term instead of a C.

In the orchestra at Lincoln Junior High, our wonderful teacher, Mrs. Cornelia Madsen, saw enough talent to organize a string quintet. Chris McKellar played first violin. Switching to viola later, he played principal viola in the Utah Symphony for 30-plus years. When introducing him, I insert my claim to fame by telling people, "Yes, we played in a junior high string quintet together, but *he* kept practicing." Don Pine played 2nd violin, Dan Crofts played viola, I played cello, and Bill Everett played string bass. Good people all. Word got out that we were pretty good, and we played many places. A string quartet with Chris, Don, I and Terry Hill on viola continued 3 or 4 more years. Terry, more mature than the rest of us, would introduce us and add, "We have received many requests, but we're going to play anyway."

One evening during or after Mutual (Young Men today), a seventh grader and two of us eighth graders were talking outside the chapel when we noticed a high school or adult guy next door kissing his girlfriend. The big-mouth seventh grader hollered something at him and he came running after us. We took off. We were all fairly fast, it turned out, lucky for us, though he was not slow either. As he chased us around the chapel twice, he was only 4 or 5 feet behind us, reached out once and nearly grabbed the seventh grader, in 3rd place barely behind us. We could not run inside, because one has to slow down to open a door. He would have caught us before we could open it, so we had no lead to allow trying anything except sprinting barely out of his grasp. Could we have whipped him, three 12-to-13-year-olds against one adult? Maybe. Did he have a knife? Probably not. But with possible blood spill, black eye, sore jaw, smashed head, or tooth loss, it seemed that trying our comparative leg speeds was a preferable first option. Of course, we were each doing all those complex analyses and must have independently arrived at that same conclusion as we ran for our lives, no? No. After two laps, he gave up and left. Maybe he lost a girlfriend to disappointment that her "man" could not catch any of the junior high kids.

During 8th grade, I got the flu. I felt like death warmed over. If I sat up, I'd feel light-headed and near passing out. After 2 or 3 days of feeling miserable, I prayed to Heavenly Father, that I was weary of feeling so sick, and asked if He might make me better. Immediately after the prayer, I felt better. I sat up and did not feel faint. I stood up and walked, had strength again. I walked around the house, amazed at the sudden and great change. Coincidentally due to be over? No, I knew how I felt seconds before the prayer and the huge change after, so I knew that God had answered that prayer (lesson 6: God answers prayers).

January 1963, my Grampa John W. Stubbs passed away at age 79. The oldest son of each of his 10 children were the pallbearers, so I got to be one, though at 13, I felt a little out of place and small among the large muscular grown-men cousins that I hardly knew.

In our backyard was a large playhouse or clubhouse, with a loft that I enjoyed sleeping in through the snowy winter. I came to love sleeping outside and breathing fresh air. Our dog liked sleeping in the bottom of my sleeping bag. How it lived without fresh air, I do not know, but I did not mind, if that is where he wanted to sleep and keep my feet warm. Gardners visited once and Reed later commented how tough he thought I was when I walked across the snow in bare feet to get to my outdoor winter bed.

Track tryouts were announced that spring at Lincoln Jr High. I had been running 2 to 4 miles a day for a year and tried out. I was the best half-miler (their longest race). Bill Conover was also one of the 3 half-milers. In practice time-trials I ran 2:22 and 2:24. Only one track meet, but it was a big one. Five junior highs of north Utah County met for Alpine Day, May 17, 1963: Lincoln (Orem), Lehi, Pleasant Grove, American Fork, and another. As it was my first race, I was nervous and did not know what to expect as 15 runners (the 3 best from each school) lined up for the two-lap, 880-yard half-mile.

The starting gun fired, and the pack took off sprinting. A half lap into the race, I was 13th place out of 15. I could not even see the leaders, but I knew I was 13th place, because I looked back and only 2 were behind me. I also knew I could not keep the pace they were running, so I resigned myself to simply doing my pace and my best, no longer thinking to win. Toward the end of the first lap, I noticed that the crowd had slowed to about the same pace I was running. From 440 to 660 yards, they slowed some more and I passed 4 or 5 guys to be in about 8th place with 220 yards to go. At 660 yards, the pace slowed to considerably slower than I was running, and I easily passed 3 more runners in the next 100 yards. With 4 runners and 120 yards ahead of me, I took off for the final sprint. Three were grouped together and I passed them easily. From 2nd place, I could see the first runner 12 or 15 yards ahead and not going as slowly as the others; nevertheless, I was gaining. With 50 yards remaining, he was 8 yards ahead. With 20 yards remaining, he was 3 yards ahead. I overtook him in the last five yards and won by only a foot or two. It was a new record for the 8th grade half-mile—2:19—breaking the old record of 2:21. I ate my honey-loaf, and though I could hardly walk the rest of that day, I enjoyed a happy contentment. The 2nd-place fellow was from Lehi Junior High. I met him again 4 years later. When all looks hopeless, staying calm and doing one's best can bring results (7th lesson learned).

Once I worked with a group at the Church Welfare Farm in north Orem, and later volunteered a few other times on my own. I simply ran to the farm, told the man in charge that I came to work a few hours wherever he needed help. I worked, then ran back home. That was my little way of helping in the Lord's work and doing some good in contrast to what one 7th grade teacher thought of me the year before.

When the school-year ended, my summer job was picking fruit for fruit farmers: strawberries, then sweet cherries, then pie cherries, peaches, etc. I enjoyed the tasty job. The only drawback was that I was as loose as a goose from when school let out in the spring until it started again in the fall.

That 1963 summer after 8th grade, I hiked Mt Timpanogos. Beautiful and memorable.

The Stokes family had regular family reunions, so we Stokes cousins were well acquainted. Stubbs reunions were rare, so I did not know all my Stubbs cousins. At our Stokes reunions, many of us grandchildren loved listening in on the adults' business meeting. Hilarious! Uncle Wayne, Uncle Eldon, Uncle Don, and occasionally others could turn mundane topics like balancing a budget and a genealogy report into the funniest conversations ever, if only I could remember them. In contrast to fun—

Alan almost drowned at the 1963 summer Stokes reunion. The best collection of recollections happened at a Stokes cousins reunion in 2024, a tad on the facetious lighter side, as Stokes always are. I insert that collection of recollections here:

Several recounted their role in saving my younger brother, Alan, from drowning in a lake that reunion in 1963, when Alan was 6. His cousin, Kelly, age 5 at the time, said his dad, Uncle Morris, told him not to go near the water when no adults were around. Alan, a year older, said his dad had not told him that, so Alan got on a raft and started paddling out. Once out a ways, Alan lost his balance and fell in the water, which was over his head, and no adults were around. Kelly started yelling to get some adults' attention, and it worked. So all agreed that Kelly was a hero.

Aunt Eloise heard Kelly's yells and she too started screaming to get some men's attention, and Shawna was also screaming, which sent her brother Larry to the rescue. So they were also heroes.

Harold, Larry, Uncle Don, and Uncle Quinn all heard the alarms and ran to the lake and jumped in, heroes all, swimming toward Alan. While running to jump in, Uncle Quinn took off his wristwatch and put it in his pocket. Larry was nimble enough to disrobe while sprinting to the lake (had learned in a life-saving class how to disrobe while running). Uncle Don may have tossed some attire along the way

too. Harold, about 16 at the time, explained that he was the first to get to Alan, reached down, pulled him up, and put him on the raft. So they were all heroes, and we all agreed that Harold was a primary hero.

Alan reported that he was wearing boots, pants, sweatshirt, and sank like a rock, could not float or swim with all the wet heavy clothing on, but he could jump up from the bottom just enough to catch a breath of air at the top of each jump before sinking to the bottom again. Alan kept doing that, but was getting tired and knew he could not last much longer. As Harold swam toward Alan, Harold could see where Alan occasionally popped up. Harold said that the water was murky enough that if he had not seen where Alan popped up now and then, he would not have known where Alan was nor could have seen him if always under water. So we all agreed that Alan was also a hero, for jumping up enough to let Harold know where he was. In fact, Alan raised the point that his falling in the lake is what created all the heroes. If it were not for his deciding to go on the lake, there would have been no heroes.

Then I added: Well, I was the lifeguard. I was 14, and my name was on the schedule as the lifeguard at the lake that last shift, that Sunday morning as people were packing and leaving for home. So I walked to the lake to do my assigned duty and stood on the shore, watching the lake, without a soul in sight, to make sure that no one drowned of all the people who were not there. After a while, Mom came to get me, to go to the car and help pack. I told her that I was on lifeguard duty; it was my assignment on the schedule. She said, "No one is even here at the lake now," which was true, and that "everyone is packing and leaving." So I obeyed and followed Mom to help pack. Evidently, not long after I left, Alan and Kelly wandered down to the lake to see what fun they might figure out. So it was my leaving my assigned life-guard post that created all those heroes after all. A bunch of talented rationalizers we all are.

In all seriousness, I remember Dad later saying that he drove home that afternoon and night with a heart full of gratitude to Heavenly Father for the spared life of his son, as the rest of us slept. That long drive from the reunion in Southern California to Utah Valley was our first summer in Utah (1963); it would have been a short drive if we still lived in Pomona. As an anti-climactic loose end, Mom, Dad, and I were packing at the car when someone came running to tell us that Alan almost drowned. We all hurried to the lake. I arrived and remember seeing Alan lying on the raft, and Larry in wet garments, standing on the raft and paddling it toward land amidst the growing crowd of curious on-lookers—curious of how Alan was doing, not of how Larry looked in a soaked last layer. By then the rescue was complete and the other rescuers were walking out of the water and gathering items. Alan says he never lost consciousness, but came close, swallowed some water, and was near giving up the jumping up. Uncle Morris, a doctor, checked him out, and everything seemed okay. After writing the accounts and thinking of it all, I too got choked with gratitude to God and to all the above who helped in the rescue of my little brother, Alan.

The Move to Provo (1963)

I attended Lincoln in Orem only one year, and then we bought a house in Provo, 592 E. 2200 N., and moved into it early July. On June 10, 1963, 3 weeks before we moved in, a multi-ward Explorer Scout accident near Escalante, Utah, killed 13 and injured many others. A large truck carrying scouts and gear rolled backwards off a cliff. I was that age and missed by 3 weeks being part of it.

Ninth grade happened at Farrer Junior High. The one class I did enjoy was Algebra. Regularly getting the high score suggested an ability in math, which was encouraging, to know that I had an ability.

When I was in 9th grade, my dad suggested that I read the Book of Mormon, so I did, and enjoyed it, in fact, was much impressed, enough to read it again in 11th grade, again in 12th grade, again in the Army, and twice on my mission—6 times by age 21, though I doubt I had read 6 other books besides it by age 21. But that would change, reading hundreds since. I could feel that it was true while reading it.

About this year our cousins, Stan and Reed, moved to Provo, where my Uncle Morris Gardner (a physician) began practicing in Provo. Stan was Eric's age and Reed a year younger than both, or 3 years younger than me. So I was the oldest and hardly the wisest of this band of ball-tag professionals. Our mothers were identical twins, and the four of us became best of friends. Reed became an all-state football

player and played college football, as his dad had also. Stan became one of the best tennis players in the state, first singles at USU. Eric and Stan played ping-pong like professionals, needing a large room, and eventually became best friends, as the more conventional pair of us four, and Reed and I became best friends as … I guess "less-conventional" pair is exactly the phrase that fits us. If readers wonder what is meant by less-conventional, read the rest of this, and then read Reed's life history, one of the best and most interesting lives ever lived. Of course, he has to write it first, but I have very high regard for my cousin Reed. Determination and hard work had him excelling in sports and all he did, and a consistent desire to do God's will had whisperings of the Spirit leading him through many interesting experiences.

We 4 played a lot of basketball, football, ping pong, and ball tag around the house or among the oak trees in Oak Hills. One time, Eric, Stan, and Reed each ran a quarter-mile lap in a relay against me, running all 3 laps or ¾ of a mile. They were 13, 13, 12, and I at 15 did beat them (barely), and 2 of the 3 were among Provo High's best runners in a few years. We ran in bare feet on BYU's rubberized track, and I had bloody feet after 1320 yards, but a 440 was not far enough to bloody their feet, evidently.

We now lived in a rural area, so Dad bought 2 horses for us kids. Dad had grown up on farms and most of my cousins on Dad's side were farm boys; but Dad's occupation had me and Eric being city kids (now in transition). Most of those rural cousins were reasonable about the whole thing, but one older cousin saw us city dudes as oddities of nature, judging by a comment at me (I was 10, he 16). Yet after harboring a less-than-lofty liking of him for 30 years, I met him at a Stubbs gathering 30 years later, and he was a nice, friendly, humble fellow. That is like the difference between this life and the next. Here we often hurt each other in our narrow views of what we think others should do or be, while in yonder spheres, we'll know better and love each other for the good that each is. Going to high school reunions, I also found that even the jerks in high school became likable reasonable fellows after life had worked them over a bit. So I learned not to judge too harshly those not yet grown up (8th lesson), and have I grown up?

Dad bought us a big strong black gelding that was quite fast and a smaller old white stallion, not so fast. We grazed them on the big field where the Provo Temple was later built. Without saddle and stirrups, mounting the sizable black horse was a high jump and luckily I could jump well. The black horse could stop on a dime, and did so whenever he felt like it, leaving me and the laws of physics to be best buds in a continuing trajectory the horse had established for me. I was always very obedient to the laws of physics. Of course, we never used saddles, always riding bareback, which lack of resistance allowed the laws of motion to operate more clearly for both observers and participants.

First or Sophomore Year of High School (1964-1965)

Tenth grade was fairly enjoyable: Algebra II, plane geometry, football (starting wide receiver sophomore team), and track. I had good friends—Scott Argyle, Ed Platt, Mark Nordgren, Lynn Smith, others—but little social life beyond talking in class. Scott and I both played cello in the orchestra, both ran the mile in track, both took every math class that Provo High offered, and both tied for 13th place among sophomores in the state math contest. One might mistake us for twins, except that Scott was 6' 4" and I was 5' 11" … and he was tall, dark, and handsome, and I was … me … and he was brilliant and I was able to keep up if I worked hard. All those friends have always been the most kind and pleasant people, stellar examples of good men.

When winter came, the snow-covered foothills northeast of Provo were good tubing. Stan, Reed, Eric, and I found a long hill (200 feet) with a good slope and a short 6-foot steeper part at the end, which ending was only a nice quick final dip when going moderate speeds. But we kept moving our starting point further up and the tubing path got packed slicker and faster each run. Our starting point eventually reached the top. Someone suggested we do a train, where each holds the legs of the person behind him. I do not remember our order except that I was last. With extra momentum we sailed down the hill faster than any of us expected, and so fast that the final dip disappeared. The train's momentum simply shot us sailing through the air until we landed in a 4-thump heap—thump, thump, thump, THUMP. I was the

oldest and biggest and last and landed on the other 3. Everyone except me was groaning. The pile of kin gave me a soft landing. Some were so slow to get up that I was hoping they were still able to get up. Feeling only slightly responsible as the oldest and theoretically wisest of this mound of moaners, I was relieved that no broken bones or serious injuries emerged from the pile of bodies untangling themselves from a heap in the snow. We were not as bright as the snow that day.

However, I made sure that I kept up on my quota of minor injuries. That same year I once fell off head first from the black horse running about 30 mph. I was running him up his favorite dirt road (now under Provo Temple parking lot), but he always veered left, so I would lean forward to grab the reins closer to his bridle to pull him back to the right. But one time, I leaned a tad too far and lost my balance, and when riding bareback, that is all it takes. As I was going off, I ducked my head to land on my upper back instead of on my face or head, and expected a pounding hoof to smash my face that same instant, but I was spared. I did a quick somersault and came up running. The back of my shirt was shredded, but I was okay, except a slightly chipped ulna near my elbow. The next few days I recognized the slight pain and swelling like previous chipped bones, but I was tired of casts (had 2 or 3 in CA), and there were no movement limitations, so I said nothing and let it heal how it would, but can still feel the bump there.

Dad wintered the horses with a farmer in Lehi. Some Saturday in the spring, Eric and I rode the horses from their winter stables in Lehi to our house in Provo for the summer. Dad showed us the way by driving us the route we were to ride them back on—roads less traveled, etc. Luckily, we remembered the way … or Eric did. Eric always had a good sense of direction and memory. Mine was good too, but his was closer to flawless. Riding a horse 20 miles left me more sore than walking 20 miles. I also did not want to get hungry during such a long day, so I made a loaf of bread into peanut-butter-and-honey sandwiches—11 sandwiches. It turned out that 8 would have been fine, but I ate the 11 anyway.

That spring in track, I did the mile in 4:57. Gary Hatch, a senior, was the first miler that year, a pleasant fellow, great role model and good to this newbie, second miler that year.

A Summer on the farms followed my sophomore year. In June, Eric and I hauled hay with friends, Jeff and Lee Pearson. We would load the hay wagon, then as the other three rode on the wagon, I ran the mile from the hay field to the hay barn. We unloaded the hay, then I ran the mile back to the hayfield, then load, run, unload, run, etcetera, for a half day. In the afternoon, I rode the wagon with the others. In a June race open to all high schoolers, those workouts improved my time by 5 seconds (4:52) over my previous best only 3 weeks earlier. Yet in anxiously anticipating the straightaway and tensing up in anticipation, I tightened up and lost. Thereafter I practiced doing a relaxed sprint, not worrying, and not needlessly burning energy by being tense, but instead, letting unnecessary muscles relax.

I think it was that summer when I was 16, the black horse came galloping to our house in the dark of early morning, and slipped and fell on the cement driveway while trying to make the sharp turn into the driveway. I was sleeping outside on the flat concrete garage roof, my summer habit, and heard the black horse's tumultuous arrival. I got up, but could not see in the dark, but I could hear the black horse breathing and lightly snorting, so I knew who it was. I climbed down from the roof and saw that the horse had scraped itself quite badly, so I woke Dad up. Dad guessed that the white horse might have gotten loose and spooked the black horse, so Dad stayed to doctor the black horse's wounds and sent me to check on the stallion. I jogged the half mile (the warm-up needed for what would soon be) to where the horses were normally tethered, but no white horse there. It was starting to get light, and a ways to the north I saw "Whitey" chasing 3 mares in circles around a small pasture, perhaps an oblong acre. The pasture was near the mouth of Rock Canyon, just north of what is now the MTC's large grass field.

Seeing the long rope still around his neck, I climbed into the pasture and tried to catch up to the rope. But the horse knew exactly how long his rope was and knew what I was doing and would take off each time that I was within a few feet of the end of the rope. The horses were all running around quite a bit anyway. I decided it might work to wander around nonchalantly in haphazard patterns, pretending not to care about the horses at all. It worked. The stallion quit paying attention to my random meanderings,

and then I arranged one such meandering to cross the rope. Since part of the plan was to show no interest in the rope, I did not look down at the rope until I reached it. Then I quickly bent down to pick it up, and 3 things happened simultaneously: the horse took off again, I noticed my foot stood in an entanglement of the rope which wrapped around my foot, and I was being dragged by a stallion chasing mares in season.

My first thought was a story Dad had told me about a cousin of his that was dragged to death by a calf. The boy was walking a calf, and thought it easier to tie the rope around his waist than to hold it in his hand the whole way. A dog came barking and spooked the calf. The calf did not slow down until the boy was dead. A calf did that, and here I was being dragged by a stallion. I tried to sit up a number of times, but the speed and bouncing prevented it. I could do lots of regular sit-ups, but this was like trying to do a sit-up with 300 pounds on my chest. I tried but my hands could not reach the rope around my foot.

I knew my only hope was that if the horse happened to approach a corner, so as to have to turn 90-degrees or partially double back, it might allow me a moment of slack in the rope, sufficient to sit up and quickly undo the entanglement. That thought no sooner crossed my mind than it happened. Cornering themselves, the horses had to do a sharp left turn, and I came to a brief stop, sat up quickly, and undid the entanglement. I had barely gotten it off my foot when the rope was again accelerating, this time through my hands. I had not yet had time even to stand up, but I knew there was a big knot at the end of the rope, so I flexed my knees a little, dug my heels in the ground, and let the rope slide through my hands until the knot came and lifted me to my feet as planned. I was off to the races. At least I now had the option of letting go if I wanted to, instead of being dragged to death. Though not a fast horse, the old stallion was faster than I was and I barely kept my legs under me. I found that holding the rope with both hands made my legs swing wildly, so I held the rope with one hand and swinging the other arm kept the legs in line. I circled the pasture a time or two, striding faster than my legs normally carried me, while thinking about what to do. As hard as I tried, my efforts did not slow that stallion in the slightest. The 2nd lap I noticed that it came a little closer to the only tree in the pasture. I thought that, with the help of centrifugal force and an extraordinary effort and burst of speed to the right, the outside, I might be able to run on the other side of the tree, and with the tree's help, perhaps stop the horse, if I could hang on to the rope during the jolt. A lot of if's, I know, but worth a try.

Situations conditioned with lots of if's remind me of my Uncle Eldon's quip: "If we had some eggs, we could have some ham and eggs, if we had some ham."

Yet the plan worked. Perhaps the 3rd lap around, we came close enough to the tree to try. As we approached the tree, I sprinted to the outside as powerfully as I could and managed to go on the other side of the tree. The tree stopped both of us instantly, and the momentum swung me around such that I crashed into the stallion's ribcage as we met on the other side of the tree. He was one surprised horse, stood still in shock, as if puzzled at how I had accelerated so fast as to suddenly catch up with him and smash into him from the side. I also managed to hang on to the rope in the flurry of a sudden stop from 20 mph and being hit by a 700-pound linebacker. I quickly tied the rope to the tree, then went to get Dad's help.

When Dad and I arrived, I was amazed at what I saw. Though not a big man (5' 7"; 160-170 lbs), Dad untied the rope from the tree, held it with one hand, and showed the horse who was boss with the rest of the rope in Dad's other hand whenever the horse tried to do anything but follow us back to the grazing grounds. I could see that keeping it facing toward the holder was essential, because if the power of the hind legs were directed away, no one could hold it. Of course, I never had that option, sailing lickety-split behind Whitey from the moment the knot hit my hand. One more time that Heaven was watching over me. No one else was awake yet. Whosever windows were in view of that pasture missed quite the spectacle that morning at dawn. We can watch the not-so-instant replay in yonder spheres.

Early July that summer, Uncle Eldon called to invite me to work on his 80-acre farms in Idaho. He had recently had a heart attack and needed help. I agreed and my parents drove me to Idaho.

My cousin Renny from LA also came to work. He and I worked 11 or 12-hour days, 6 to 6, arising 5:30, hauling sprinkler pipe every morning and evening, and hoeing 80 acres of beans during the day, with other tasks breaking the monotony now and then. Evenings were enjoyable with whoever was

home of Uncle Eldon, Aunt Eloise, Renny, Ranae, John, and Teresa. Uncle Wayne also came a week or two. I hauled sprinkler pipe with him, and a time or two he got me laughing so hard that I dropped the pipe and fell on the ground laughing. After picking fruit the previous summers, then hauling hay, then working Uncle Eldon's farms in 1965, I was half enjoying the transition from city kid to farm boy—but only half. I liked exercise and hard work okay, but the tedious, like hoeing 80-acres of beans for hours or days? After a month or so, Uncle Eldon asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. My answer made its rounds a few reunions: "I'm not sure, but I know two things I don't want to be—a musician or a farmer." I have later thought that I would not mind being either. Both are more enjoyable than many things—always immersed in beautiful music or the outdoors—both of which I like.

Renny was 19, myself 16, that summer. He was an all-city fullback in LA, 6' 1" and 185 pounds of solid muscle, and had played running back for BYU the year before. Nobody messed with Renny, even if he was a city kid. He was like a big brother to me that summer, though I ate more than he did. Both of our appetites surprised our Aunt Eloise, whose family must have been light eaters. The first morning, Aunt Eloise made lunches and asked me if I wanted one sandwich or two. My mom, still there, overheard and said nothing, but later admitted thinking, "They'll learn soon enough." I soon made my own lunches of 5 sandwiches. Renny reminds me of the gallon of A&W root beer that we drank, he a quart and I three.

Another time Uncle Eldon had me burning weeds in a long irrigation ditch along the side of a large field of cut wheat stubble. I was steering the tractor with one hand and directing the flame thrower at the weeds with the other. I simply did what I was told: watch where the tractor was going and burn the weeds in the ditch. Uncle Eldon waited at the corner of the field. When I arrived, he asked, "Did you ever think to look back?" I looked back. The field of stubble was shooting flames 50 feet in the air. Luckily the crop had been cut, and the field was surrounded by roads and water-filled canals, so we watched it burn. I was doing what I was told: steering the tractor and burning the weeds. Looking back was not among my instructions. Maybe watching me work was harder on Uncle Eldon's heart than doing the work himself. He was not impressed with my powers of observation. My wife has often been similarly unimpressed. I once came home and sat on the couch. She asked me if I noticed anything new. I looked all over, but could not see anything different. I was sitting on a new couch that she had just bought.

That summer, my uncle, aunt, and cousins could not understand my running 5 miles each evening after work and before supper. The hint that maybe I was not working hard enough during the day if I had enough energy to run 5 miles each night was expectable. I think I tried once to explain that farm work does not increase running ability, and that whether I felt like it or not, running was the only way to run faster. By then I had a 3-year habit of running 6 days a week, year-round, with no plans to stop.

My first date was also Renny's arrangement, not my idea. I was in the bathtub, washing off the dirt of the 12-hour day, and could hear Renny on the phone in the hallway, talking to his girlfriend: "You can't go out this Saturday? Why not? You say you have a cousin in town visiting and you can't go out unless she can too? Hey, I have a cousin in town too, and he'd take her out." Through the door I wanted to holler, "What cousin are you talking about? Hey, wait a minute!" Though 16, I was not interested in going out with someone I did not know. I was not sure I even felt up to going out with someone I really liked, let alone a cousin of Renny's girlfriend, whom I did not know either. But it was painless enough. Our other cousin, John, and his girlfriend came too; the 6 of us went miniature golfing. Not until one-and-a-half years later would I date of my own initiative. I was back home to Provo in time for school to start.

Junior Year (1965-1966)

Eleventh grade was the first time I attended the same school 2 years in a row since 3rd to 5th grade at 95th Street Elementary School in LA—6 different schools in 6 years (5th to 10th). I decided not to play football my junior year, but to train for track year-round. When I told the football coach, he was **NOT** happy, as I was the starting wide receiver on the sophomore team. But he was also the track coach, so he did not say a lot. My knee-joint was hyper-extended one play during the sophomore season, not

seriously enough for medical attention, but enough that I could still feel it months later, and I did not want to risk any more injuries to a leg, as running was more important to me than football, in spite of 2 uncles and 2 cousins having played for BYU, and cousin Layne's son Kyle Van Noy, a star linebacker in the pros, and Alan, Reed, and Duane being all-state or junior college gridiron greats elsewhere. Such a collection of relatives is the best I can do for a claim to fame in football.

In high school, we took an occupational aptitude test—answering questions and doing manual dexterity tests, etc—to suggest what we might be good at and what to avoid. I was not quick at putting pegs in holes and was told that I should not be a barber. Yet later in the mission field, out in the wilderness, I gave my companion a haircut. When we arrived at district meeting, everyone liked it, wanted one, and I became the district barber. So institutional assessments are not always valid.

Lightning is dangerous, but at age 16, I was still stupid. It may have been the summer or fall of 1965 that I was doing a workout, running up to the Y and beyond. In the valley it was only intermittent drizzling, but as I ran higher past the Y, I could see occasional lightning popping on top of Y mountain, but not on the west face nor in the valley below. However, at 16, I had not heard of anyone being struck by lightning, so I was dumb enough to entertain the thought that maybe lightning does not strike people, only objects of nature. From 17 on, I knew better and my awareness of lightning deaths grew annually the rest of life, including 4 in Blanding, but at 16, I was still stupid. I arrived near the top edge, where the slope began leveling toward the top, not as steep. Yet as I approached that edge, a bolt popped perhaps 200 yards to my front right. Not long afterwards another bolt popped to my front left. I stopped. No strikes for a minute or two, so I started again. Then another bolt hit 100 yards ahead, then another to the side. At that point I thought: "Just in case lightning does strike people, maybe I should save this workout for another day." So I turned around. All my life since, when reflecting on that day, I gasp in gratitude for Heaven's protection in spite of my ignorance. Ever since, I try to avoid lightning, but sometimes a storm will come in faster than I can run to my car still miles away, so I lie on the ground and wait for the bolt-concentration to move on. A documentary on lightning showed that the electric charge branches out into hundreds of fingers looking for contact with ground, and as soon as one branch hits ground, all the fingers instantly converge and follow it into the ground as one massive bolt. One time I could hear all the many crackles in the air above and behind me, then a boom that seemed not far behind me. Protected by Heaven all those times? Definitely!!! The best way to do lightning storms is indoors.

In high school, I did well in track, math, physics, and avoiding any semblance of popularity. I loved math and science, but did the minimum in English, literature, and history. I enjoyed reading history, but not trying to read teachers' minds when tested on what they think the significance is of this, that, or the other. In math and science, one can figure out the answers. But in literature or history, the interpretive tangents are so many that guessing what the teacher had in mind was like luck in the lottery. A subject so wobbly and unstable as literature—no thanks. History, at least, really happened, and should be beneficial, though 'we learn from history that we do not learn from history' to paraphrase Hegel, Shaw, etc.

In my youth, I acquired a love for classical music, some of it so beautiful. As a cellist, I played in orchestras some works of the great composers, whether our performances were great or not. In high school, I listened to classical music while doing homework in the evenings. Dad had a sizable collection of classical music records (the old-time disks played by a needle on the old-time phonographs, for you more recent arrivals on earth.) Most people learn to like what they listen to when young, but the best classical pieces can impress even those who have never heard it. Much classical music is pleasant enough, but not overly impressive, to me. However, do not think that you do not like classical music until you have listened to the first 25 pieces listed in Appendix G, which, to me, are amazing and beautiful.

The sophomore basketball coach was my PE teacher that Fall of my junior year, and we simply played basketball most days. I came to Utah hardly knowing what a basketball was. In my Hawaii and California neighborhoods we only played football and baseball. I was good at football—fast, quick, diving catches, etcetera—and okay at baseball. But somehow I never crossed paths with basketball until we moved to Utah, where Utah winters encouraged indoor sports. Perennial good weather in Hawaii and

LA had us outside. The first months of 8th grade PE, I was learning how to dribble and could not shoot worth beans. By my junior year, three years later, I was still not a great basketball player by competitive standards, but I could run and jump, was quick, had improved my shooting some, and occasionally did something impressive. I happened to be having a good day one day in PE, and the teacher (sophomore basketball coach) was noticing, unbeknownst to me. After class, he told me that I should try out for the basketball team. Now keep in mind that this was Provo High School. PHS took state as often as any in the state. I was a junior, so too late for preparatory or sophomore ball, I would be trying out for varsity. Since the sophomore coach thought I should, I decided to try out as he suggested.

The day came and no less than 200 boys were trying out for Provo High's basketball team. Coach Condie wanted to get it whittled down quickly and not waste time with 200 run-abouts, so he divided us into 40 teams of 5. Each team played 3 minutes, twice. Of course, with only 6 minutes to show what one can do, half hogged the ball and the other half of us never touched it. So I ran up and down the court for 6 minutes, and that was my Provo High basketball career. I was not too disappointed. Someone had to fill the ranks of the 180 cut from the tryout roster. Coach Condie was also the sophomore football coach and started me at wide receiver, so he did know I was good at football. Yet if I had made the BB team, I would have had to learn how to dribble. Coach Condie did not know that we were probably related, since I too am descended from the pioneer Condies, but I did not know that then either, which was just as well. He probably did not want to know about a relative who could not dribble; and with 90 cousins, I was not looking for more relatives either, though I liked all that I had, that I knew of. So, moving on out of each other's life worked well for both of us. A good balancer in the minus column for this bro bri brag-a-thon.

Through these 10th and 11th grade years I had some dreams that seemed significant. In the first, I dreamt about a girl being pursued by evil people. Though far away, I started running that direction, hoping to help her, but suddenly a huge black ferocious dragon-like monster 10-stories high rose up with a roar that shook the earth, representing all the forces of evil, and whose death-threatening glance would strike horror in anyone. I stopped, hesitant to go on, then awoke. I reflected on fear and fighting evil.

In another dream, I was walking through a creepy forest with overhanging trees, when suddenly a vague shadowy figure almost appeared a few yards off, but was mostly hidden behind a tree. I only saw clearly his bow and arrow, and instantly a flaming arrow was flying at me. He was too close and the arrow too fast to dodge it. But just as it was about to hit me, it was like it dissolved into thin air and became non-existent. Then the bow appeared from behind a different tree and shot another sizzling arrow at me. The same thing happened. I tried to jump out of the way of this zooming arrow, but it also was too fast to dodge, I could not get out of the way quickly enough, yet again the arrow vanished just before hitting me. These arrows would suddenly appear and zip at me from a different direction every other second, though I could hardly catch a good glimpse of the shooter, yet each arrow dissolved into nothing two feet before impact, and I received no hurt. The fire arrows were not like the large flame torch arrows of cowboy movies or medieval warfare, but of a different kind I had never seen. The flame was smaller but hotter, like an intense phosphorous sizzle on the first few inches of each arrow. Then the dream ended.

I wondered at the meaning of that dream also, until a year or two later when I read in DC 3:7-8: "you should not have feared man more than God. Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words—yet you should have been faithful; and He would have extended His arm and supported you against all **the fiery darts of the adversary**; and He would have been with you in every time of trouble." Also DC 27:17 "Taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to **quench all the fiery darts of the adversary**." Though I had no recollection of having read such verses before, that is exactly what that dream was—some force quenching the fiery darts of an unseen adversary.

In Utah, Dad organized us into a troop of Christmas carolers. At 13, I could sing tenor and Dad bass. A year later, Eric's voice changed to his beautiful bass / baritone voice (age 12) and Dad could sing wherever he was needed, Mom sang alto, the sisters developed beautiful soprano voices, and Alan could sing too. We actually sounded pretty good for an amateur family choir. Each Christmas we visited 8 or 12 homes over a night or 3 from when I was 13 on. They continued the tradition after I was gone, still

having two mature male voices, and after Eric left home, Alan sang bass. So for years, they or we cobbled together whatever combination was available and continued the tradition until the large extended family of grandkids would make a silent approach to the door comical to impossible, but no one cared, surprise no longer a priority. Perhaps 1965 or so, someone that we visited took this picture.



Eva, Carrie, Rita, Alan, Brian, Eric, and Darrel, Christmas caroling 1965, give or take a year

Moving on to the tedium of daily life, in the middle of my junior year, the physics teacher, Mr. Twitchell, encouraged me to enter a paper in the state science competition. Another boy with brilliant mind did an elaborate piece of research in chemistry, the title of which I could not understand, and Roger Billings, a senior, did his paper on the hydrogen engine, which later made him millions when he established his industrial plant that made hydrogen engines. But me? In the dead of winter, I was out in the cold of dark January nights, squatting on the ice to measure the coefficient of friction of a piece of tire on ice, at different temperatures and with different weights, using a spring scale to measure forces from whatever direction. The coefficient of friction is the force required to move something horizontally divided by its weight, which was a vertical force in my experiments. Among a variety of surfaces, the surprising discovery was that ice at really cold temperatures was not as slick as a sandy surface. When one takes an ice tray out of the freezer and touches the ice, it is sticky, not slick. What makes ice slick is the thin film of water that forms on the ice's surface. So the slickest surface of all was ice near 32-degrees, then sand, but ice at near zero temperatures was less slick than a sandy surface, because the colder temperature was more resistant to letting the thin film of water form to make it slick. So the interesting finding was that sandy surfaces were actually slicker than really cold ice, even though ice above 10 or 15 degrees was slicker than either. That had me headed for more attention than my comfort zone cared for. First a Salt Lake newspaper columnist wrote about my paper; then a tire company or two were rumored to be interested (but I never heard from them); then one of the news stations asked me for an interview while we were in Salt Lake at the state science fair.

I do not remember which station interviewed me—2, 4, or 5—but it was on that evening's news. I was taken to the news studio and was told the general question I would be asked, and as I began formulating some wordings in my mind, the spotlights suddenly came on, blinding me. I could not even see the guy asking the questions. The brightness surprised me so much that all former wordings were gone. I did start talking, on some kind of autopilot, but when finished, I had no idea what I had said. I have thought about attempting to track down a copy of that interview of sometime in March 1966 to see what I said and sounded like when young. Then again, if I were to see it, I might wish I had not.

After that March moment in the blinding spotlights of science, track season returned. The most frequent off-season workout was an 8-mile run from my house to Rock Canyon, then north on dirt roads

in the foothills to overlooking Provo Canyon and back. Those dirt roads have now been eliminated by subdivisions. Besides the 8 miles, the challenge was the grueling kick the last 400 yards when approaching the turn-around point. The 4 miles of good pace to the mouth of Provo Canyon was over gently rolling hills, but then a steep 300 yards of uphill preceded the final level stretch. After running the 4 miles to it and then the steep 200-300 yards, I felt like I had just finished a race with a long kick already, then, when I felt like collapsing, I would take off and sprint 200 yards on the level road after feeling like collapsing. So by track season of my junior year, I had a kick that … well, Reed tells it best. My cousin Reed often came to the Provo High track meets. Mingling with athletes on the sidelines, he would overhear their conversations. As we milers entered the 4th lap, one who had never seen me run would say, "It looks like our man is going to beat Stubbs this time." But then someone else who ***had*** seen me run would say, "No, he doesn't have a big enough lead. Watch when Stubbs hits the back straightaway." Then, the other guy's small lead was soon gone, and down the back straightaway the new gap widened quickly around the curve and more down the final straightaway, to win easily, though behind at gun lap. I was not playing games with anyone, for I was doing the best pace I could, but no matter the pace, my mountain workouts enabled me to sprint the last 300 yards in 40 seconds (equal in speed to a 53-second quarter), regardless of pace or how I felt.

The runner with the 2nd best finishing kick in the state happened to be in the same region. I first met McQuivey in a dual meet at Pleasant Grove High School, this our junior year. In the mile race, he was right behind me with a half lap to go when he darted past me with a rather amazing burst of speed. I hit full sprint to keep up right behind him, both of us rounding the curve with more velocity than is usual for high school milers. I remembered my lesson from the summer before. I did not panic; I did not think about the coming straightaway or become anxious; I put the anticipation out of my mind and simply relaxed as much as possible, using the minimum energy necessary to keep up with his exceptional speed. Then as the track straightened, I dug in, moving to the outside, limbs pumping, and slowly gained, starting two yards behind him and finishing only two yards ahead.

Toward the end of the meet was the medley relay, in which we both ran the final half-mile leg for our respective relay teams. We both happened to get the baton about the same time; it was another race between us. This time he led from the start, as I stayed right behind him. Again, with 220 yards remaining, he shot forward like a human cannonball propelled; and again, I took off too, staying on his heels until the track straightened, at which point I shifted from a relaxed 95% sprint to a 100% sprint, pumping arms and legs down the final straightaway, and again I barely edged past him. The two hardest fought wins of my whole high school career were both on the same day—that day.

In fact, even though my best times would be later in races that I would win by a wide margin or not win at all (state), the closest, most hard-fought victories against runners with a comparable kick were the first race (8th grade) at age 14, the last at age 40, and the two on this day against McQuivey.

My junior-year best time was 4:46, an 11-second improvement over my sophomore year. I was recovering from the flu at the region meet, but if I did not run region, I could not run state, so I ran. McQuivey beat me, but I placed behind him and got to state. There were four 4A regions (no such thing as 5A in those days) and the top 3 of each region combined for 12 runners at state. I think I took 10th or so. The Salt Lake City schools had a pair of 4:20+ milers, so watching them from a distance was something of a spectator sport for a 4:46 miler. Even Jim Ryan, the world record holder, only did 4:03 in Utah's altitude at the NCAA meet at BYU, though he could do 3:51 at sea level.

A driver's license also plopped into my life at 17. I could have gotten it a year earlier, but I was not interested. Strange I know, but I preferred running or walking over driving. Provo was not so big that I could not run or walk wherever I wanted to go. I walked the 1.3 miles to and from Provo High every day for 3 years, and only one way was uphill. A school bus stopped only a block or two from my house, but to me it seemed easier to walk fast and get to school close to the same time. Nevertheless, a year after I was old enough to drive, an employer and others asked when I was going to get a driver's license. The fact that I was now beginning to think about asking a girl on a date also favored getting a license.

Summer 1966, our Lee cousins came back to the USA from India and stayed with us a week while their parents, Uncle Bob (computer specialist) and Aunt Nila (Dad's sister), took care of some matters elsewhere, CA perhaps. I love my Lee cousins. It was good to see them again. We saw them often when both families lived in Southern California, then we moved to Utah and they moved to other places too.

That summer I also used my newly-acquired-a-year-late driver's license to drive 20 miles to Benjamin every day to haul hay for a farmer at 75¢ an hour. After hauling hay, Doug Simkins got me a good part-time job as after-school janitorial help at Rock Canyon Elementary School. We would sweep floors, empty trash, wax and buff floors, and whatever else. I whistled while I worked and some teachers mentioned enjoying the creative variations as they did their next-day preps.

Senior Year (1966-1967)

Twelfth grade was mostly school, the after-school janitorial job of cleaning my assigned rooms at Rock Canyon Elementary, the daily workout, dinner, homework, and bed. As exciting as all that was, I added orchestra again, after a 3-year hiatus. I rejoined orchestra mainly because a certain girl was in it. She liked me some, but not like I liked her. And a number of guys liked her and she liked a number of guys. In retrospect, I should have tossed the tunnel vision aside and enjoyed friendships with a number of other wonderful young ladies, but that perspective would take time to acquire. For now, my temporary tunnel was the pain of non-reciprocation. It was hard to run on a broken heart, yet sometimes it felt as if the daily workouts were all that kept it beating. It was the hardest thing in the world to start running when feeling more like lying down and dissolving into the ground, but once into running, I felt better.

Such sorrows had me turning to God very deeply, and as my heart intensely turned Him-ward over many months, His spirit was often with me, sometimes so strong, like a burning within, desiring to do people good, a powerful strengthening of soul and body in assurances that God is with me, if trusting in Him through whatever. I most often felt those strengthenings of spirit while running in the hills.

On Fast Sunday, February 5th, 1967, as a 17-year-old priest behind the sacrament table, I listened from the side as Bishop Lincoln Card, a most kind and beloved man, began his remarks something like this: As bishop it is my privilege to interview the youth of our ward, and as I sat across from one young man, the spirit whispered to me 'this one has faith like the sons of Helaman'. Knowing I had recently had my interview, I wondered—is that what those strengthenings of spirit were?

David B. Haight, future apostle, and his wife Ruby, were in our ward at the time. Dad and I were their home teachers. Ruby Haight told my Dad after the meeting, "I know who the bishop was talking about." And it was later confirmed as well, though many youth are comparable, then and now, but afterwards I felt a great responsibility, that where much is given, much is expected, and faith without works is dead. Years later, I crossed paths with Apostle Haight, and he said that his becoming an apostle was all my fault … for being such a good home teacher. Yeah, right.

I never ate school lunch, made a sack lunch of peanut-butter-honey sandwiches or took a raw potato to eat for lunch. I was a weird duck—no argument there. During track season, I never ate lunch. I felt better and could run better when good and empty by 3 pm workouts.

Twice my senior year, I did a 24-hour fast on a weekday and ended it with an 8-mile run, when feeling the weakest, just for the challenge, then ate. Also that year was my first car wreck. My friend, Ed Platt, and I double-dated to a school dance. I had picked up Ed, but luckily we had not picked up the girls yet. Trying to see street signs in the dark, I slowed to read one and KABOOM. A BY High guy, also looking to the side, plowed into us from behind without braking at all. The strong impact had us coast a block from a near standstill. It pulled the front seat out of the floor and left it leaning against the back seat. The steering wheel was between my legs, knees pointing up. Items on the front dash did not land on the front seat nor on the back seat, but on the back dash by the back window. The sudden impact sent all on the front dash straight to back dash. The last 3 feet of the car, now a one-foot accordion-shaped trunk, spilled gas onto the street the whole block from impact to where I finally pulled over. No injuries. It was

good that we had not picked up the girls yet, because anyone in the back seat may have broken a neck. The front seat gave way and ripped out of the floor, but the back seat was not free to move. Ed's jeep then got us to the dance. Poor dad had a wrecked car that took time for the insurance to replace.

I did senior year in the depths of yearning, hoping, and praying, in seemingly endless sorrow with winter workouts, the 5- or 10-mile runs followed by several 220 repetitions. Turning into a blast of winter blizzard with each 220—who could know the self-abandon to throw the burdens of heart to the wind and explode into another long sprint against a winter blizzard wind? The knotting of muscles over the last 70 yards of each 220 and the lungs bursting for oxygen were minor discomforts compared to the other pain, from which running was a slight temporary release, or at least a different kind of hurt, and one that I could do and had some control over and that had an end in a few seconds, instead of seeming to have no foreseeable end. Yet all ill has an end, when trying to do right, and will seem a small part of a beneficial big picture with time, but while in the thick of it, the empty can seem hopeless. Keep going, do well, and all will be well (9th lesson). Other wonderful young ladies whom I thought highly of were Donna Pond, Margaret Sagers, Mary Conover, Jolynne Davis, and Frankie Johnson, but I dated little.

Track season my senior year had my best mile time at 4:35—11 seconds faster than junior year. My year-round workouts made me faster, once doing a quarter-mile in 50 seconds, as timed by the coach in a relay, and 2:00 minutes for a half mile in another relay. Over the previous year I had invented 2 new workouts. Speed is the product of power (feet per stride) and quickness (strides per second).

$$\frac{\text{feet}}{\cancel{\text{stride}}} \times \frac{\cancel{\text{strides}}}{\text{second}} = \frac{\text{feet}}{\text{second}}$$ (stride units cancel to yield feet per second)

I would find a gentle slope, and run alternate uphill 100's for power and downhill 100's for quickness of stride. On the uphill 100's, I focused on power, propulsion, or powering the most out of each stride. On the downhill 100's, I would simply pick them up and put them down as fast as I could, soon going almost faster than my legs could carry me, striding quickly just to stay on my feet and trying to lift knees a bit. After a few such workouts, a level ground sprint felt like effortless flight. By senior year, I was as fast as most sprinters, but not all. In a multi-school 100, I would have been in the middle, sometimes faster half, but seldom the winner. But in the mile, half mile, and quarter mile, I was fastest, except at state.

I then took it one step further. In doing repetition workouts, one usually jogs between reps to better challenge the body's systems than walking does. But instead of jogging the 100 yards back to the starting line when doing 100-yard reps, I decided to run both ways. It takes 20-25 yards to coast to a stop after sprinting a rep, so in going both ways, I had only a 25-yard jog back to the starting line to rest between reps instead of a 100-plus-yard jog back to the other starting line. I would do ten 100-yard reps that way. It was brutal. One cannot even do that workout unless already in good shape. The first two repetitions, no problem. But the 3rd or 4th rep already felt like the last 100 yards of a race. Any time after the 4th rep, if I even thought about how many reps were left, the strong inclination was to stop. After each rep, I would think—only one more—but further back in the mind, keep track of the number. It was excruciating! But the results were extraordinary. I could sprint the last 300 yards of a mile without it even hurting, and one time the last full quarter mile. I could do nearly the same sprint previously, but it came with the expected hurt, but after those workouts, it seemed I could fly effortlessly with no end-of-race hurt. The track coach let me train on my own, figuring I knew as much as coaches did, which was true. After I told him about that workout, he had me take the quarter-milers to do that grueling up-hill, down-hill alternation with 4-second rests between. The workout was so hard that their efforts looked piddly, almost jogging instead of sprinting the last half of the later reps, but even their best effort at something so hard had all of them improving their quarter-mile times by 3 or more seconds the next track meet.

Rather than bore readers with the whole track season, let's skip to the end, since all this running stuff might make non-runners tired just reading it. At the Southern Division meet of Provo High, Payson, Springville, Spanish Fork, and some other not remembered, I set a new school record and a new division

record of 4:37. Both have been broken since, but at that time, no one in the 5 high schools had run a mile that fast. Toward the end of the meet were the relays. I always ran the final half-mile leg of the medley, but this day Coach Randy Autentico put me as the first quarter-miler in the mile relay (4 x 440). The other quarter-milers used blocks, but I was a distance runner, so I was standing among the 4 others crouching. The gun fired and we accelerated around the first curve. With the staggered start, I knew not how I was doing among these speedsters until we began the back straightaway, where I found myself 4th out of 5. Not caring for that look, I hit my top speed, quickly passed the 3rd place guy, and came between and even with the leading two. When they saw me come abreast of them, they hit their top speed as well, and the three of us were sprinting all out down the back straightaway. They were nearly as fast, but could not do that speed very long. I pulled away and could not see them in my peripheral vision by mid-straightaway. I simply kept going as fast as I could around the next curve, and my training enabled me to not let up through the final straightaway either. Not until I handed the baton to the next runner and stepped off the track did I look back and see that I had a 20-yard lead or more. That inspired the others to do better than their best and we won by 30 or more yards. Never had our mile relay team won by such a margin! Coach said I did a 50-second quarter. A new division record in the mile and at least a 50-second quarter had the coach smiling. After the meet, he was talking to some of the team, shook his head in disbelief, and said, "He trains year-round and it shows." Coach Autentico impressed me, so I later looked up his obituary: It said he was later a bishop, a coach all his life and often received impressions for individuals. I think that is what happened for me that day when he changed me to the mile relay. He suspected it and wanted to show that I was also the best quarter-miler in the division, when no one knew, nor did I. I do not remember any sub-50-second ¼-milers in our division.

Days before the region meet, I got a cold or flu again and barely made 3rd place to qualify for state, behind Steve Bergeson and McQuivey. This year the Bergeson twins had come to Utah. Stan was a top half-miler and Steve was a 4:20-something miler. They were **GOOD** and were in our region now, but in the northern division. After high school, the Bergesons ran for BYU, and Steve ran the half mile at the NCAA meet in 1:48 the very next year (only seconds off the world record), so that is who we were running against in 1967.

At the state meet, one week after region, I was still not feeling strong or wholly recovered, but state meets do not accommodate individual bio-schedules, so I did my best, in fact, better than I expected to do that day: my best time of 4:35 in spite of not feeling well. Though not feeling great, I was able to keep close to my usual pace through the first three laps, which pace had me in 11th place among the 12 best runners in the state, with 300 yards left. I did not feel like the usual kick was in me that day, but this was state and the last race of my high school career, so feel like it or not, with 300 yards left, I hit it with all I had. And the kick was there. It surprised me as much as it did the runners I passed. I was sailing past some of the best runners in the state down the back straightaway and around the curve. In fact, the last 300 yards I was going so much faster than the whole field that I was gaining very fast on runners 4 and 5 when the finish line appeared just before catching them. I could have sprinted another 50 yards, and if I had started my kick just 20 yards sooner, I would have taken 4th place (instead of 6th). But 6th (almost 4th) in 5A-state on a sick day is not bad, and I knew that I was really the 4th best miler in the state. Steve Bergeson was best and only two others, whom I do not remember, were better. McQuivey was not there; maybe he got my flu. Nevertheless, my last track meet, I did the last 300 yards as fast as ever, from 11th place to almost 4th place among the best runners in the state. The first 3 could run the mile faster, but none had a faster last 300 yards. So, my best high-school times were a 4:35 mile (Utah elevation), a 2:00 half mile, and 50-second quarter mile, the latter two in relays.

At the final end-of-year assembly, the faculty honored me with Provo High's outstanding math student award. I had earned an A in every math class Provo High offered, and did a perfect score of 36 of 36 on the math portion of the ACT test, and graduated from Provo High School, spring of 1967.

Post-High-School Crossroads (1967-1968)

After high school, paths diverge quickly and widely. Until then, society has prescribed a rather rigid rut for the masses: 13 years of public schooling. The moment of transformation is a graduation ceremony in caps and gowns that denote rank, dignity, and learnedness (as opposed to rank dignity; commas are important). In this formal setting, the learned ones are instructed one more time, as if the institutions hold some hope that this last lecture will sink in better than the first 3,000, but how many remember their commencement addresses? These final instructions often include allusions to "making a difference" and "big opportunities" without explaining that "big opportunity" is only a paraphrase of "fat chance" and without telling them that they will have little time for making a difference because they will have to work so darn hard to "make money" enough to keep their heads above water in order to give the Federal Reserve insane amounts that most have no inkling of. So every spring, society releases a new wave of the semi-marketable masses into the marketplace to seek their misfortune … I mean, fortune.

That was a tad facetious, and I am really not that cynical. We have a wonderful life in this country and an array of opportunities to dwarf all previous centuries. So, dear graduates, dive in and enjoy, but do be aware that forces are eroding Constitutional freedoms, and that taxes and inflation, which did not exist before the Income Tax and the Federal Reserve (both created in 1913), are making it ever more difficult to make ends meet, pay off a house, and get ahead, because the Federal Reserve is getting a large chunk of what we peons make, forwarded to them by the IRS to pay the national debt, which they created out of thin air so that we can pay them interest for their doing nothing but giving us inflation. (See "The Federal Reserve Reserves the Right to Funnel Your Funds Their Way" in *Morsels for the Mind*.)

After graduation, I did not want to go to college. School too often seemed pointless busywork. I loved learning, but hated school, yet did the homework. Grades were A's in math/science and A's and B's in the else. I loved math and science, but not much else. Both parents had college degrees, and Dad a doctorate and a BYU professor. So they were a tad tilted to learn I was not college-bound. Though surprised, they were reasonable and accepting of "whatever." Of course, if I was not going to college, the "whatever" among other options was a *big* question mark in many minds, less so in mine. I wanted to be free and enjoy some recovery time from 13 years of forced schooling before being subject to another inflexible regimen—the Army. After all, Vietnam was raging and a short vacation before basic training did not seem at all unreasonable to me. Not until four years later, after marriage, would sufficient persuasion "encourage" me to try my hand at higher education.

Immediately after graduation, the 6-day Arab-Israeli War broke out in June, 1967, and Vietnam was at its height. I joined the Army Reserve. As part of my plan to enjoy life, I bought 2 tickets to each of 3 nights of the NCAA Track and Field Championships at BYU in Provo that June 15-17, planning to ask a different girl each night. The third night, I could not find a date, so I asked my sister Rita if she would like to go. She said yes and we went to the last night, which had many finals, most of the best races anyway. I did not hear about it until later, but while I was gone to rest in a room or get refreshments, the man on the other side of Rita, who also had tickets in the same seat all three nights, said to Rita, "You must be his sister." Now, lest readers think whatever you are thinking, only differing degrees of animation in conversation gave it away. After two nights of talking, Rita let me enjoy watching the track meet: watching Jim Ryan run a 4:03 mile, Charlie Greene do the 100 in 9.1, the USC team of Earl McCullouch, O.J. Simpson and two others set a new world record in the 4 x 110-yard relay.

Freedom Festival was it called in those days? It changed to Osmonds' Stadium of Fire in 1980. Whatever its name in 1967, in that year's BYU stadium 4th of July Extravaganza, I had some acting part in a western scene, pretending to fight and tumble about, while the sound system did the talking and music. The only reason to include this is because the very best part was my brother Eric's unscripted part. He was not in it … or had no plans to be. Nevertheless, one scene included a group of psychedelic dancers that would enter a side stage in the dark and when the spotlight hit them, each danced his/her own haphazard dance of weird, wild, psychedelic movements. You have to know Eric; he is an original. He

was not practiced at the standard repertoire of known dances, but was a wonderfully original multiplier of movements as his own kind of creative dancer. Eric arrived at the stadium, looked around for a good place from which to watch the July 4th Extravaganza, and noticed this slightly elevated platform that had a really nice view looking down on the main stage. He wandered over there, and enjoyed watching the performance from this platform above the stage. Later, some other people came and stood there and watched also. He thought they were dressed a little strange, but he was okay with strangely dressed people—he grew up with one. Then suddenly the spotlight hit the group and they began their wild dance, not synchronized or in unison, but everyone doing their own goofy thing. Without missing a beat, Eric came alive with the most creative, loose-limbed limbo imaginable, and outdid them all. He fit in so well, no one even knew he was not part of the rehearsed group. I want to watch that not-so-instant replay too.

Hill Cumorah Pageant was July 24-29, 1967. At the end of my senior year, the seminary teacher informed me that I was selected as one of two senior boys from each of 5 Utah Valley high schools to be flown back to Hill Cumorah to help build stages for the Pageant. To avoid having to pull so many missionaries out of the field, the Church flew us recent grads to NY, housed us in tin barracks behind the Hill Cumorah, and fed us only 3 meals a day—a tad less than custom. Ten of us seniors along with 5 or 6 elders from that mission built the stages the middle 2 weeks of July. A good group, pleasant fellows. One boy from Lehi High School was the one I beat in the 8th-grade half mile 4 years earlier.

One day, some of the boys and missionaries began a contest to see who could sit against a wall the longest. With back against a wall, legs bent at a 90-degree angle, upper legs horizontal and lower legs vertical on the floor, one had to apply enough pressure against the wall to keep from sliding down or from sliding up, both of which were easier than 90-degrees, but not allowed.

Most did it for 1 or 2 minutes. One missionary did it 3 minutes—the record to that point. As I walked by, they asked me to do it. I took the position, and 3 minutes passed, then 5, 10, 20, 30. It seemed I might go indefinitely, so at 45 minutes they said, "See if you can go an hour, then we'll call it quits." I was drenched with sweat, but finished the hour, mainly because I had figured out a trick, without which I could not have gone much longer than the others did. Soon into it, I realized that I could hold myself against the wall with the strength of one leg. So I would let one leg do all the work for a few seconds, then switch, letting it rest while the other leg did all the work. Alternating legs, such that each leg rested half the time, enabled me to go somewhat indefinitely. Sometimes thinking can magnify performance (10th lesson learned). I later told them the secret. The superman status slipped a bit, but I was honest, not wanting anyone to think that I'm more than I am … as if many suffer from that.

Reid Bankhead, our neighbor in Provo and a BYU religion professor, was the mission president of that New York mission at the time. After building the stages for the multi-night production, we were assigned parts to play in the pageant. I was one of the Roman soldiers leading the Lamb to be crucified. I cannot argue with that—it is just like me sometimes—hurting people and not knowing what I am doing. As I thought about it through the years, it was exactly my place—the lowest.

When news releases show crowds enthusiastically burning effigies of Judas, I think we might better look inside than pretending to beat up on Judas. Christ said, "As ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me." In that light, how we treat the least matters more than mobilizing in mob mentality to pretend that beating Judas down lifts us up. The priests and prominent leaders of the day wanted Jesus out of the way, as he was a threat to "their kingdom." They were not interested in truth, but in maintaining their interests. Their taunting Him to save himself as He did others, means they knew of the miracles. The raising of Lazarus from the dead was widely known and was the last straw, yet they cared not that the power of God was in Him, or even that He **IS** God. They made fun of Him and arranged His death. How often do we see in our society the unfair manipulators, and in schools, those who make fun of, belittle, or bully? How often do we see people wanting others out of the way when in the way of something they want? Likewise, the religious and civil authorities of Joseph Smith's day were bent on his demise in the same way. Though he was harassed to the degree of being subjected to over 200 court cases in as many months, he was never once found guilty, but the misinformed of the day wanted him out of the

way. He was a threat to "their kingdoms" though he only taught the truths of Heaven as he was called to proclaim. Yet none were punished for his death and many other Mormon deaths! To lesser degrees, many of us do unto others as unfairly as the societal momentum did to the Master. After returning from the Hill Cumorah Pageant, I continued working at Rock Canyon Elementary School from July to November.

That fall my schedule was quite flexible, so I ran some workouts with the BYU cross country team. That was fun. I could keep up with them. Once we ran to the Y. I knew the Bergeson twins and became acquainted with others. In a sprint I was faster than most, though the Bergeson twins could barely edge past me by inches. Of course, they were nationally-ranked 1:48 half-miler material.

One day that Fall, the Conover family—Wilson, Ray, Bill, and Mary Conover, good people all—invited me along for a hike. Bill Conover ran the 880 with me at Lincoln Jr. High. The trail crossed a stream and suddenly Bill, next to me, grabbed me to throw me in, but I pulled him in too, yet somehow I went in knees first with him on top, and my right knee hit a rock in the bottom of the stream with the weight of two of us contributing to the crunch. It cracked my knee-cap. **I had a limp** and I could feel the left-to-right crack across the kneecap for decades. I walked gingerly, but this was my 4th or 5th cracked or chipped bone and I was tired of casts. Besides, by the 3rd day, I could run on it, kind of, and continued playing football most days—as was our custom that fall—though the knee would give out sometimes.

That fall, my good friend Mark Nordgren and I would frequent the strategic social outlets on campus, like the library, bowling alley, ping pong tables, etc. After a while, we would give up on finding any cute girls that would talk to us. Of course, we were too tentative to talk to them, which made their lack of initiative quite predictable and our evenings quite uneventful, but our final consolation was to enjoy a milkshake while we laughed ourselves silly at how irresistible we weren't.

Halloween was memorable: Mark, his cousin, and I took my Army duffle bag trick-or-treating at the girls' dorms. Trick-or-Treating gave us a socially acceptable context for interacting with girls … if adults' trick-or-treating is socially acceptable. But were we adults? Did anyone care? Neither did we nor the girls. Nor were we trying very hard to act like adults that night. With no little kids around, we had the dorms to ourselves. It was fun! Soon word spread through the dorms that 3 guys were in the vicinity trick-or-treating, at which point we did not even have to knock on doors. We simply walked on the grass below the railings of the three floors, held the duffle bag open, and all 3 floors of girls would come out onto their respective balconies and throw their candy from the 3 balcony railings into our duffle bag. For one day we were popular! We were a hit! And we were hit, too, occasionally, but with so much candy falling from the sky, that is to be expected. I do not think they were trying to hit us. Come to think of it, if they *were* trying to hit us, maybe we were not as popular as we thought. Either way, it is as close as we ever came.

Army Life (November 1967 – April 1968)

November 1967, I entered basic training at Fort Ord, California. At one meal, the first server plopped mashed potatoes in a square of my tray, the next staffer put fruit salad in another, the next guy put whip cream on my potatoes. The 4th soldier, trained to adjust quickly to the unexpected, did a quick analysis and put the gravy on my fruit salad. My 6 years of weekend warrior had begun.

The yelling, lack of sleep, some all-nighters and long hours of training in mud puddles, rain, and poison oak made life-after-Army more wonderful, but the push-ups and mile jog did not compare to my workouts back home, so I gained 20 pounds in basic training. Through high school, age 15 to 18, I always had a sore muscle and never were both feet free of blisters. My workouts were strenuous and varied enough, all kinds of sprints, hills, runs to the Y, etcetera, that I always had a slightly sore muscle somewhere and a new blister before the previous one(s) healed. But in basic training, all activities were with the unit and we jogged only a mile a day, so I had no sore muscles and all blisters healed. In the change from 10 miles to 1 mile a day, I gained 20 pounds, while most soldiers lost weight during basic. Yet as soon as I was back home, I hit the hills with my usual 8 to 10-mile runs and whipped back into shape. But that was 5 months out. I was in the Army now.

Inspection

Maybe it is the increased need for comic relief from the tense drudgery or a natural result of stereotypical military intellects on the loose. Whatever it is, one episode began the first day of basic.

Military personnel seemed very concerned about first impressions. They provided each new recruit with a series of experiences the first few days to ensure that no one got the wrong impression. So that no one felt left out of the (dis)orientation process, several precautions were taken: no soldier was spoken to with less than a roar; everyone's head was shaved bald; and when anyone did not respond quickly enough, a swift kick or 50 push-ups helped him to remember to move more quickly next time. Such was the pleasant setting in which we found ourselves that first day of boot camp.

After preliminaries and haircuts, we were taken to get our issue of clothing. The sergeant handing clothing over the counter was about 6' 6" tall, a solid muscular 250 pounds, and built like an NFL linebacker. Anyone who stuttered or hesitated in spitting out sizes was screamed at with a voice that shook the building. By the time the last fellow had been processed for clothing, we were all a bit rattled. As we marched toward the barracks, one poor private was the victim of a freak accident.

We were walking along a road by a railroad track, each of us wearing three coats, five hats, and carrying two duffel bags full of clothes. With a duffel bag over each shoulder, we got tired and had to jostle them occasionally to shift the weight a little. Private Skaggs was thus shifting a duffel bag when he accidentally knocked the saucer hat off his head. That is the formal, round, dress hat with a shiny visor—like the policemen wear in children's books. Besides falling off his head, the hat happened to land on the railroad track, and a train happened to be moving slowly beside us, and the hat happened to fall right in front of the iron wheel of a boxcar with no opportunity to snatch it back up until after the huge metal wheel had passed over it. Needless to say, Private Skaggs' hat had a permanent crease. It no longer sat flat on his head, but had a V-shape, like a butterfly.

Now Private Skaggs was a likable fellow and did not deserve such a quirk of fate any more than the next guy. Nevertheless, he had a permanently creased saucer hat, which was "property of the United States Government" as we were often reminded. After the warm reception at clothing supply and realizing that all authority figures in basic training were about as understanding as a grenade, Private Skaggs decided against informing any superiors of the condition of his saucer hat. So he stuffed it in his wall locker, hoping no one would see it. Fat chance.

Some days later we had a full inspection. Each pair of soldiers was standing on either side of their bunk bed. All items in the footlocker and wall locker were to be inspected as well. Strict regulations specified every detail of how socks and handkerchiefs were to be folded and placed in relation to all else. Even a toothbrush pointing the wrong way could spark a screaming lecture with noses almost touching. The sergeant did most of the yelling; the officer's main role was to provide a presence of austere dignity.

In the midst of this friendly atmosphere, Private Skaggs waited at the last bunk. As the officer and sergeant progressed down the row of bunks, creating a scene over the slightest infractions, everyone wondered what would happen when they reached Skaggs' saucer hat in his wall locker. It was a very tense situation. After an hour of yelling at each of us in turn, they finally arrived at the last bunk and asked Private Skaggs a few routine questions. The initial confrontation in front of the bunk went tolerably well, better than most. They were getting tired of yelling and wanted to finish up. But as Skaggs remained at attention in front of his bunk, the officer strolled to his locker behind the bunk. Everyone held his breath, almost fearing for the poor soldier's life. If the inspector's reactions to this were proportionate in severity to the minor infractions, then who knows what loomed as a possibility.

Finding the V-shaped saucer hat perched on the top shelf of the wall locker, the officer stared at it, picked it up, and slowly began his return to the front of the bunk where Private Skaggs stood at attention. The officer kept his cool the entire length of the bunk bed, studying the saucer hat now in his hand. He walked so slowly that he was undoubtedly counting to ten or trying to figure out what he could possibly say to do this justice. The inspectors had already used all their vocabulary.

Arriving in front of the soldier, the officer did not say anything for a while. He seemed at a loss for words, still scouring his extensive vocabulary for the right words, we assumed.

Finally, he spoke, "Is this your hat, Private Skaggs?" —A profound opening.

"Yes, Sir," replied the private. —An equally profound response.

"What happennnnnnnnned to it, Private Skaggs?" the officer roared.

We were breathless. What could he say? —Little choice but to tell the truth.

"A train ran over it, Sir." The tenseness of the situation exploded into uncontrollable laughter. Even the officer had a hard time keeping a straight face. But he did manage one more question.

"Was your head in it?"

That shattered all the dignity, discipline, and ferocity the officers had so methodically manufactured. The carefully orchestrated austerity was now in shambles, as our pitiful efforts to muffle laughter deteriorated to ghastly wheezing. After telling Skaggs to exchange his hat for a new one, the officer quickly strode to the exit before he too doubled over with laughter, as the rest of us clung weakly to our bedposts hoping to remain on our feet until he did reach the exit.

We were all granted leave to go home for Christmas. The bald head was not an asset at the New Year's Eve dance. It did attract glances, but not the kind everyone dreams of. The two-week leave sped by like a tracer bullet. Boarding the bus to leave family and girlfriends behind was a lonely moment … especially since I did not have a girlfriend to leave behind. Back at Fort Ord again, in loneliness I was not alone. Most were about as thrilled as I was to come from home and Christmas back to basic training where sergeants welcomed us with open armories.

In basic training there were various tests. One test was the PT test (physical training), which had five events: how fast one could low crawl a certain distance, run an obstacle course, swing along on a series of bars, run a mile in combat boots, and another that I do not remember. We did this PT test a few times. The last time "counted" and I maxed it as the only one in whatever number of companies to get a perfect score of 500 out of 500 points possible. I ran the mile in 5:30 in combat boots, a minute slower than in track shoes, but nearly a minute faster than the second-place guy.

Not exactly like my Dad's WWII story. Other soldiers in his basic training unit made fun of him for not drinking or smoking. He explained the Church's health code, the Word of Wisdom, but some continued to taunt, saying that if that were so, then he should win the final upcoming physical event, which in those days consisted of a lengthy race through an obstacle course with high objects to jump and climb over, for which height was an advantage. Dad at 5' 7" had a built-in disadvantage. Because of the mocking, Dad prayed humbly the night before that God be with him to perform well. The next day, Dad won the lengthy obstacle course race. The teasing stopped. (Lesson 6 again: God answers prayers.)

The difference was that in my unit no one teased me. Many noticed my not drinking or smoking, were curious, asked about it, knew I was LDS, and were satisfied with the answers. By my day science was substantiating the Word of Wisdom as wisdom and people were more interested in trying to quit than in teasing others to start. So I had no pressure to win, like Dad did, but won anyway.

After finishing the 8 weeks of basic training, we got to go to Advanced Infantry Training (AIT) and do more elaborations of the same. I was in AIT with 15 or 20 guys from a Guard unit in Missouri. They were likable and a mostly decent bunch of guys, a number of them religious Baptists or other. When it was learned that I was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, a number of them often asked me questions about our beliefs. I answered their questions. Some good conversations dotted those weeks. I often wonder if I had more effect on more people in the Army than on my mission.

Elder Spencer of a nearby unit was a returned missionary. One weekend he heard of a stake dance in Monterey, so we took the base bus to Monterey. We found an address in a phone book, and walked to the Stake Center, but no dance. We were planning to stay overnight and go to church the next day also. No buses were going back to the base until the next day anyway. So we walked the streets of Monterey after dark, finding nothing but closed establishments. About 11 pm, we more earnestly searched for a

place to sleep. Neither of us had money for motel, so that was out of the question. Sleeping on the ground is normally no problem, but it was quite cold at night in northern California in February, and we had no sleeping bags. In fact, we had nothing but the clothes on our backs. Near midnight we found an open laundromat with two large flat tables for folding clothes. No one was inside, so we each took a table and stretched out. We had not been there 10 minutes when a man walked in and said we had to leave. He was locking up. We walked out and down a few more blocks, turned off the main street into some neighborhood with rows of houses, looking for one that might be vacant that we might sleep in. We spotted one that certainly looked vacant, weeds in the yard, etc. The front door was locked, so we quietly walked to the back door. Luck or not, it was unlocked. We slowly opened the door and found each room stacked high with old furniture. So the house was certainly vacant of people, but was it safe to sleep in? The cobwebs and thick layers of dust did our military best-dress uniforms no favors, but the place would have to do. It was nearing 1 a.m. and we had little choice. A distant street light allowed a slight light, but mostly we each had to feel out a sleeping place. He picked a room and I picked another, each trying to find a flat place to sleep on top of a pile of odds and ends about 3 feet high. We were the odds trying to find place for our ends. I found a rather flat spot and a blanket, but I was not sure how many spiders I was sharing it with. I lay down carefully, trying to be perfectly quiet, as I did not want to attract attention from neighbors or disturb the sleeping spiders. It worked mostly. Soon a group of rough characters walked by and stood in front of the house awhile. Was this their hideout? Would they be coming in? Awhile later, I needed to roll over, but did not want to disturb the spiders. The discomfort eventually encouraged the attempt. I turned slowly and CRASH! The structural integrity of the junk's layers below me gave out, and the whole pile jolted down a few inches. I did not know which to worry about more: neighbors calling the police, or the gang outside now sneaking toward the house, or the spiders scurrying about? So I let the fears cancel each other out. The surface was still reasonably flat and I stayed still.

Then we saw a light next door—the neighbor's headlights pulling into his driveway at 1 a.m.! Through the windows we saw the guy get out of his car, and it was the same man who had closed the laundromat! We stayed real quiet. He would have called the police on us the 2nd time. We did get a little sleep. At dawn's first gray, my companion whispered me awake from the other room. I answered, "I hear a familiar voice whispering from the dust" (Isaiah 29:4). We got up, exited, closed the back door quietly, and noticed that dust splotches had made our clothes a different color—a color we might call sad plaid. We brushed off and started walking to church. We were a little early (two hours), but hey, that's just the way we sharp soldiers are! Sad plaid and all.

What a Soldier Wouldn't Give

In the spring, our AIT sergeant announced that on a particular day, 5 days before the end of AIT, all those patriotic souls who wished to donate blood would have the privilege to do so. The day arrived, as various groups of soldiers were going about their assigned tasks with little vigor and even less interest. Some were picking up trash, others cleaning weapons, another group was washing vehicles, and 5 KPs were peeling potatoes on the back porch of the mess hall, myself being one. Into the midst of this lively looking lot, a large long vehicle pulled up. It was affectionately called a "cattle truck" since it could hold a whole company of 200 soldiers in the long 50-foot bed. Our sergeant stepped out and announced with a voice that could be heard by all 200 soldiers in the area that it was now time for all those who were going to donate blood to board the truck. Two people got on. We were wondering why the sergeant brought such a big truck. He must have been expecting quite a crowd. He could have brought a jeep to take those two!

The sergeant squinted at the 2 on the truck and then at the other 198 milling around. He then made the announcement again—this time not nearly so casually. The words were enunciated much more slowly and clearly, and with more volume and purpose. Three more people climbed onto the truck.

By now the sergeant looked pretty silly with such a big truck for so few people. And sergeants do not like being made to look silly, especially in front of 200 privates. Yet giving blood, unlike many military

matters, was entirely voluntary. He then gave a short lecture on loyalty to fellow soldiers, wounded and dying on the battlefield, who would need that blood, appealing fervently to the patriotic chords in our hearts. When no one of this apparently unpatriotic group added themselves to the grand total of five after such an eloquent discourse, it made him look even sillier. Embarrassed and mad, the sergeant looked at the ground trying to think of what to do next. Then we witnessed one of the most brilliant displays of military genius and stratagem ever to occur in the history of the United States Army.

The sergeant yelled, "Everyone who gives blood will get out of AIT two days early." The sergeant was nearly trampled by the oncoming hordes of instant patriots who suddenly found a new concern for their fellow soldiers, wounded and dying on the battlefield. Everyone jumped on the truck. They could not get on fast enough. Even we five KP's dropped our potatoes and potato peelers on the ground and ran headlong toward the truck. The head cook came rushing out of the kitchen's back door, hollering, "Hey, wait a minute! Where are you KP's going?" No one stopped to answer. The truck pulled away with all 200 of us. Not a single trainee remained behind—an incredible response to extraordinary leadership!

Enroute to the medical units, we expressed our doubts as to whether the sergeant had sufficient authority to arrange an early release for an entire company, but we all agreed that even the possibility was worth a pint of blood. As it turned out, the sergeant kept his word, and the entire company graduated two days early. What a soldier wouldn't give to get out of AIT two days early!

Throughout basic training and AIT, I was trying to decide whether to volunteer for Vietnam or not. Where could I do the most good—the battlefield or the mission field? I was not sure, but I turned 19 immediately after AIT and was of age to go on a mission, so I decided to do that first while I kept thinking about it. The picture below was taken between Army and mission.



Front: Carrie (7), Eva (41), Rita (15); back: Alan (11), Eric (17), Brian (19), Darrel (42), 1968

Southwest Indian Mission (June 1968 – June 1970)

My parents asked me where I would like to go, if I could choose. I told them that if I had my druthers, I would like to go to the Lehites in the Southwest or in the Pacific islands. No preference was put on the form, yet I was called to the Southwest Indian Mission, Navajo-speaking. I remember that Rita made me a going away cake—such a nice sister she is. Mom said that after I left home, the food bill was cut in half. Surely, she must have been exaggerating some, no?

I entered the Language Training Mission (LTM), as it was called then, early June, 1968, with a group of 5 good guys: Norman Spencer and Von White from Idaho, Elder Salmon from Plain City, Elder Westenskow from SLC, myself from Provo—the I-15 five. Lewis Singer, Jim Dandy, Elder Bills, and another taught us. While I was in the LTM, my Grandmother Stokes asked me to write something for the family reunion to be held that summer. So I wrote the poem "The Parable of the Christmas Tree" in July.

The Parable of the Christmas Tree (July 1968)

Which of you at Christmas time Would buy tree lights and tinkling chime,
Who of you when Christmas is near Would buy bulbs there and icicles here,

Who when the season Christmas it brings Would make paper ornaments and popcorn strings
And gather decorations, two hundred or three, And then not get a Christmas tree?

Everyone has their talents, Whether good or otherwise.
Everyone has favorite things, Whether others like or despise:

Music and dancing, laughing and joking, Having a wonderful time,
From Bach to the Beatles, from Waltz to Watusi, Or even a mountain to climb,
Wisdom and learning, knowledge sublime, Inventing and exploring, we should all try sometime.

An alert, quick, and perceptive mind, Also strength and good health,
Comforts and pleasures to make life seem kind, With plenty of means and wealth,

The good feeling following a hard day's work, Getting it done and doing it well,
Seeing a great sight—a sunset or mountain, The smell of a flower or any sweet smell,

Creating or refining anything at all, Building or improving a house or a song,
Reading and writing words of worth, Repairing what's of use, correcting what's wrong,

A sense of humor that has no end, Recreation, sports, and games,
Ice cream pie and steaks to spare, Thanksgiving dinner and piecing remains,

For a girl—a new dress For a boy—what forms it,
Tree ripened fruit, And the sun that warms it,

A circus, a fair, or an acrobat, The thrill of a roller coaster ride,
Tubing, skating, ballgame or concert, Swimming in the ocean, playing in the tide,

Many things are fun, and many worthwhile; Some are both, and some just a trial.
But what is there to life, when these are done away? What is most important, that none can take away?

What is the reason, for our existence? What is the purpose? What is the end?
Let me tell, the one great end, For, indeed, it is this, my friend:

To live in love with other beings,
This alone is why we are;

"There are other reasons," one might say,
But love can't grow without this mortal clay,

"But it's said that man is, that he might have joy."
Is any joy greater than His Spirit within?

And what is that joy—the joy from Above—
As Nephi said, of our Father above,

So still it is love, the greatest thing,

Whether family, friends, relatives, or Gods,
Than to love, appreciate, understand, and enjoy

So still it is love, the greatest thing,
For love alone, Gods and men are.

So let's now compare, this reason we be,
And all other things, that aren't associations,

And who among you, would fool enough be,

Yet how many men, in vain have spent,
And do not desire, or cannot see,

To every young person, let me say,
Learn to obey, with a willing heart,

To all who may hear, let me tell,
Learn to love, with a selfless will,

To all who may hear, may you know,
Be not of the world, but clean and pure,

To you who are parents, or will be someday.
Be to your children, an example each day.

Yea, who among you, would fool enough be,

And thus every person, individually,
As big as he can, while the season lasts,

In peace, beauty, and harmony.
No other reason there be.

"To gain our bodies and be tested in every way."
And what is being tested, if it's not our love each day?

But is any joy greater than that from Above?
And can ye have His Spirit and not a perfect love?

If it is not, the joy of His love?
Nothing exceeds the sweetness, of the joy of His love.

To love and to joy in another being.

Or any person, there is still nothing more,
Other beings, whether mortal, after, or before.

To love and joy in another being.
For love alone, the universe is.

This one great thing, to a Christmas tree.
Let us compare, to the tree's decorations.

To gather decorations, without any tree?

All their life, gath'ring ornament,
Any need, for the Christmas tree?

How to prepare your trees, for the judgment day.
And from the truth, never part.

How to trim your trees, that they do well.
And listen to the voice, that is small and still.

How to care for your trees, to cause them to grow.
To help your sealing and eternity be sure.

Let me say this, that you always pray.
Grow your own trees, and they'll likely do okay.

To gather decorations, without any tree?

Must nurture and grow, his very own tree,
This short season, called mortality.

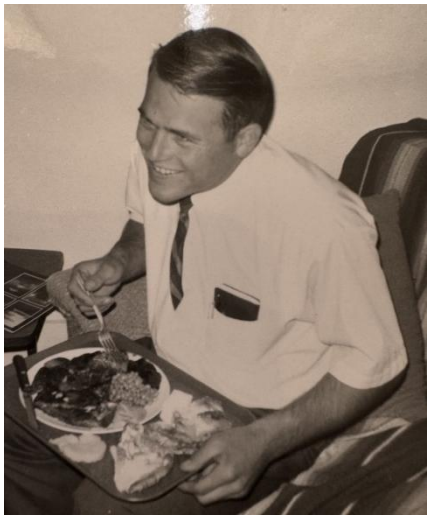
After a foundation in the Navajo language, we were flown to the mission field to learn we had not learned it. I was first put in Crystal, New Mexico—a beautiful place—for only 5 days, with Elder Matagi, an easy-going, big-hearted Samoan, as most of them are. A week later I was put with Elder Halona in Lukachukai, Arizona. We walked and taught as often as our paths passed a hogan with someone home.

Perhaps 3/4 of the areas had vehicles and 1/4 of the missionaries walked. While most missionaries desperately hoped for areas with a pickup, I preferred walking. After running all my life, then arriving in the mission field and to an area where I had to drive/ride everywhere and could not exercise, I sometimes felt like I might explode with pent up energy. So I enjoyed walking 15 to 20 miles a day, to get a little circulation and burn some energy. Many voiced the excuse that one can get more done with a vehicle. I

am not sure how much we got done with or without vehicles. We were visiting and teaching most of the time, and though one could scoot about to more places in a day with a vehicle, the impact on people's lives and the strength of spirit when walking may offset frequency. That is, our arrival may have been more pleasant when walking there than when coming in a clanking clattering cloud of dust, lurching to a halt upon the peaceful scene. But that is just one opinion—one not often taken seriously.

One time we two elders had to do a funeral of a dead baby. Elder Halona took us to some prison to get a pair of prisoners to help us dig the grave. Really? We're going to put pick and shovel in the hands of prisoners and dig a hole with them? I kept a careful eye on them as we all dug, but they were helpful and did not try to escape. Then we did the praying as the poor mother did the weeping.

Later, Elder Halona was transferred and Elder Ronnie Olson came to Lukachukai in late October—a well-built, kind, hardy soul from Wyoming, and a hard-working, likable guy.


Ronnie Olson in Lukachukai 1968


brian gathering wood in Lukachukai 68


brian 1967, graduation

I also found that the adversary works hard on missionaries. I remember feeling quite bleak or low, for no reason. Any other lows in my life, I knew the reason, but this was a subtle smothering gloom that was just there for no reason that I could think of. I would look at the beautiful mountains and know that they were supposed to be beautiful, but the beauty did not register inside me. But I kept going and doing what I could and choice moments would come now and then.

One time I seemed to do some good, though how long the effect lasted is debatable. We were visiting an inactive member family. The father had had some kind of disagreement with the branch president. After we all talked some more, I explained that one should not let a person keep one away from the Lord. Yeah, people mistreat or misjudge or are imperfect toward others regularly in the church as everywhere in life, but set it aside enough that the focus in church is the Lord and enjoying His Spirit, being fed by the truths and Spirit there, regardless how a person or two may have treated us. The next Sunday that family came to church, perhaps a few Sundays, but it did not last.

The branch president in Lukachukai was Vernon Jack, a good man, who also owned the Totso Trading Post. Sacrament meetings were attended by 4 to 6 people. The Jacks and us missionaries were 4 of them. Songs were sung a cappella by the half who sang, until President Jack asked me if I could play a little wooden pump organ that he had at home. I was not sure how to answer. I had never had piano lessons, but I had tinkered on the piano, being interested in composing music, had played by ear some. My Dad, a university professor of music theory, showed me the tonic (1, 3, 5), subdominant (4,6,1), and dominant 7^{th} (5, 7, 2, 4) chords, and the occasional use of the 2^{nd} and 6^{th} minor triads for any major key, temporary transitions to the relative minor and other keys. From that 10-minute introduction to music theory and noticing in cello parts the occurrence of those chords and getting a feel for them, I would

experiment with chords, chord progressions, and melodies that fit them. I studied the scores of popular songs and classical music that I liked, and I noted temporary shifts into other keys and other things about how composers put music together. I noticed chord progressions like the 1,6,4,5,1, used by everyone from Mozart to the 50s pop music, Baroque's 1,4,2,5,3,6,5,1 in Handel, every Vivaldi piece, Roger's "Doe a Deer" and other chord progressions. I did not tell President Jack all that, but said something like, "Uh … well … maybe." He brought the organ the next week, and when I remembered to keep the feet pumping, I found that I could play maybe 1/3 of the hymns by ear. I could sense the notes of the melody, played them with right hand, and sense the accompanying chords along the way, and played them with the left hand. That proved useful throughout my mission, as pianists on the Rez were rare. People often thought they were being helpful to put a hymn book in front of me, but I was not practiced at processing it, from music, through eyes, to brain, to fingers quickly enough. But having no music eliminated 2 of those 4 steps. I could play by ear with only brain to fingers, if I did not have music to distract me. My playing by ear simplified the music to melody and chords, which worked.

While in Lukachukai, I desired to become more attuned to the Source of all good influence and be more effective. I felt compelled to do a five-day fast. I decided to fast from a Monday morning to the next Saturday morning, November 11th to 16th, drinking water the 2nd and 4th days. By then Elder Olson and I had a pickup. So I ate breakfast Monday morning, and we drove to the Davis camp (picture in back), where the George Davis family lived among other hogans and relatives. We taught a lesson, exited to get in the pickup, but then could not find the key. We and the family looked all over, but we could not find it. So we resumed walking, which we knew well how to do, and left the pickup parked in front of their house. The first three days of the fast were okay—more tiring and weaker each day in diminishing energy reserves, but okay. Now that we were on foot again, the walking 15 to 20 miles a day became more challenging while fasting. The fourth day was hard. The evenings of both the 4th day and the 5th day, after dark, after our last appointment, the last miles of our walk home were for me a herculean effort. I had to focus on each stride and exert to put one foot in front of the other. Early Saturday morning of the last day, I awoke feeling an interesting shrinking of my skeleton. The pain was not great, but my ribcage felt a mild pain or discomfort, like it was being slightly squeezed in a vice. I assume the lack of nutrients was making it difficult for cells to replicate or for things to maintain their usual frame, and that contraction was the natural result. I lay awake for an hour or so, surprised by this interesting shrinkage feeling. It was a good experience for me, to experience some limits or dimensions of physical exertion and endurance that I had not experienced before. Nevertheless, skeletal shrinkage was not something I wanted to experience very long, so I got up 5-ish and started cooking myself a good breakfast, not having eaten since I ate breakfast five days earlier. I wondered about the fast—no extraordinary spiritual experience had happened. Nevertheless, that Saturday morning after I ate, we hitch-hiked past Round Rock and Many Farms to get to district meeting in Chinle, 50 miles away. Being strengthened by breakfast, I felt much better this day as we walked some miles before catching a couple of rides to district meeting.

It was during district meeting that the powerful burning of His Spirit within mine occurred over several minutes. It was a powerful witness of His work, with a desire to do it, filling me with a wonderful, sweet purifying love for all. As with most grantings of the Spirit, the feeling cannot be described unless experienced. The fast was rewarded with an incredible spiritual experience on November 16, 1968.

We hitch-hiked back to Lukachukai, and the next day, the people who tended our pickup in front of their house found the key in the dirt. So it seems the Lord wanted me to walk during that 5-day fast—losing the key the day it started and finding the key the day it ended. Walking some 80 or 100 miles over five days without eating was a stretch or testing and interesting experience.

From the spiritual high of November 16th came winter and midnight treks through a foot of snow to the outhouse. The only neighbors (50 yards away) had dogs that barked at us in the night, and then the neighbors, not knowing who it was, would come out with flashlights to catch us in flight. No indoor plumbing had us hauling water, using the outhouse, having a shower once a week at the Chinle chapel on district meeting days, and doing sponge baths during the week. One could see through the cracks in the

wall of the uninsulated 15’ x 20’ shelter that we lived in, and if water was left in a glass on the table, it was ice by morning (7,000’ elevation). Yet I did not mind sleeping in a shelter whose indoor temperatures dipped below freezing. Least favorite was having to go in the middle of a windy winter night to sit on a frost-covered seat for whatever minutes of bio-induced necessity, a less-than-pleasant adventure to be sure. So to keep my mind occupied during the unwanted wait, I would make up a stanza each trip, then jot it down when I got back in the house, and go back to bed. Then I worked over the several rough-draft, randomly-ordered stanzas and came up with this poem about the kin yazhi (house little) or outhouse.

A Midnight Trek to the Mighty Kin Yazh by brian while in Lukachuakai, winter of 1968-69

I’m dog dead tired as I wake up in the night,
In my warm, warm bed, just so com’fy snug and tight.
The wind’s blowing forty and it’s twenty below,
But notwithstanding, I gotta go.
Only necessity is sufficient persuasion,
‘cause it takes half the night to dress for the occasion.
I open the door and begin the trek,
And five different times nearly break my neck,
Walking on ice, as if it were bananas,
In the bright moonlight, in my red-and-white pajamas.
I’m sure it’s just a dream, one like Lehi had,
Except I doubt that Lehi, had it half so bad.
I too walked in a midst of darkness, just as dark as it could be.
I think it was a midst of darkness, wasn’t sure ’cause I couldn’t see.
I also knew there was, a straight and narrow path,
But where on earth it was, this knowledge me no hath—
And the deep dark gulf, Lehi saw only one,
But I managed many more; it wasn’t any fun.
Not only did I wander, varying left and right,
But I didn’t even know, whether I was left or right?
And as I was lost in darkness, as if to temptation yielding,
Finally, I found it, the great and spacious building.
Maybe spacious isn’t the word; nevertheless, I would reside.
I’m just glad I did not find, the mocking world inside.
I finally arrive, accomplish the feat,
But lo and behold, there’s frost on the seat.
I wish there were heat, as I land with a groan,
Shaking my head, ‘tis no noble’s throne.
And when I say land, useless is one’s sight,
Like trying to land an airplane, without any runway lights.
I wait and wait and patiently abide,
Wondering what’s wrong—did it freeze inside?
I shiver so violently that the house doth shake,
And chatter so loud that the neighbors awake.
Out they come, with their dogs and their flashlight,
To see who’s the prowler, out wandering at midnight.
I see the lights pass and hear the dogs bark,
But I can’t find the paper; it’s way too dark.

"Sick'em boys," he yells to his canines,
As I blaze a new path, making a beeline,
O What a sight, as I'm caught in his light,
In desperate flight, in my grand red-and-white.

After Christmas in early 1969, Elder Olson and I were told of an Anglo school teacher who was interested in the message. Elaine felt the truth of the message from the beginning and was soon baptized and stayed active all her life.

One morning I awoke with a black widow spider on my pillow, inches from my head. That winter I wore holes in my shoes about the size of a quarter and later in each sock. Walking in snow with a hole in the sole had my feet always wet and cold. Though not quite frostbitten, my toes had no feeling until May. I never reached a city where I could buy new shoes until well after the next transfer.

In the mission field, a number of elders take their turns at receiving 'Dear John' letters, which leaves some of them feeling quite low for a while. For those dumped or feeling dumped on, humor is worth a try, so in order to possibly help cheer the casualties of Dear John letters, I wrote this 'Dear John' letter of double meaning in early 1969, perhaps best understood the second reading.

A 'Dear John' Letter

Dear john,

It is hard to say good-bye to a long-time friend. You were always there when I needed you. Your door was always open. I always felt secure when enveloped in your protection—protected from the cold winds of the outside world. There was an air about you ... so strong ... I could sense your presence from afar ... such chemistry in you ... quiet, but powerful ... enough to knock me off my feet and leave me swooning only half conscious at times. Enveloped in your embrace there was only room for one—some people's dream, I suppose—but it was your nature; that's just how you were made. But my parents didn't think we were suited for each other very well. I tried to explain to them that when with you, people were simply not suited very well, period! Yet you were an inspiration: people always pushed harder for you.

You were kind. Though people used you when they needed you, even turned their backs on you, you protected them from embarrassment ... never made anyone blush (or flush). I'd come and spill my guts out to you every time I visited you, and you always accepted it. At times I felt like I might explode inside, but I could come to you and you were always a relief in time of need. In fact, I felt a need to visit you regularly ... when I was regular.

Life with you was simple ... not a lot of paper work ... just a little at the end. You generally had the resources in place to get the job done; but if not, life with you was a panic. But you supported me. Maybe you didn't put me on a pedestal exactly, but it was high enough. Your strong frame never let me down ... Thank Heavens! I shudder to think where I would have ended up if your support of me ever fell through.

Life for you must have been a bummer. Yet you were always so positive ... as if you always saw the good side of people. Maybe it was the good side ... I wouldn't know. But it is still hard to say good-bye. I never thought such a wonderful friendship could come to an end ... I mean, hit bottom ... I mean, be over. I never imagined that I could live without you. And it's not your fault! Don't blame yourself! Hindsight offers a clearer view of things (as if I needed to tell **YOU** that). And when the family discussed putting modern plumbing in the house next week, I tried to bail you out, but it was too much and too deep. I guess we simply will not need an outhouse any more. Times are changing, and we have to let bygones be "bye, johns."

Sincerely, not yours any more
From too many

Perhaps February or March, I was transferred to Toadlena (t^{w}ohadlini), New Mexico, on the east side of the Chuska Mountains. Elder Brown was another good man. He and I worked in Toadlena. We taught many people, and we taught seminary classes, but our overall effect seemed nigh unto negligible, but maybe more good came of it than was then obvious.

In July 1969, I was transferred to Mexican Water, on the north side of the Chuska Mountains, to work with Elder Von White, one of my buddies from LTM days. Elder White was very likable, down-to-earth, and as void of earth-shaking ideas as I was, but we tried. We walked or drove, teaching people all around the Mexican Water area, the Rock Point area, the Red Mesa area, and the area south of the San Juan River, across from Bluff, Utah. Mr. Biwo'adin was a faithful and esteemed gentleman though we did not see him often at church. He lived out in the middle of nowhere, as we all did, I guess, but he had a naturally flowing artesian well, at which we often stopped for water when passing by.

In Mexican Water, I learned not to fear bats. One summer we regularly played volleyball outdoors for mutual (youth) activity. After dark, dozens of bats would come and fly around us, between us, within inches of us, all the time, but one never hit anyone that I heard of. I guess their sonar systems were so good that they would miss us amid all our unpredictable movements.

One time my companion and I were visiting the hogans in the west limits of our area, near the San Juan River. We saw the elders of the neighboring Denehotso area 200 yards west. Their presence suggested we might be at the edge of our area, so we turned around and began working our way back toward our little trailer. We were later "talked to" about "being out of our area." When 25 miles north and out in the boonies, where no lines are drawn in the sand and no dirt roads have signs, how do we know we were out of our area? Maybe they were out of theirs! Another time, in Holbrook, I was reprimanded for being on our way to stake conference—yes, church! In our mission were many talented Polynesians and Navajos, who could sing and dance their traditional songs and dances. One Samoan elder could do the slap dance like I have never seen since. He could jump 3 feet in the air and slap himself 50 times before returning to earth. Out of that group came the BYU Lamanite Generation and Living Legends, starting a couple of years later in 1971. So, in our mission, that performing group would tour and do their Lamanite Conferences, as they were called in those days, and the idea was that the missionaries would bring investigators to those performances. Well, some missionaries would drive miles from their areas to attend those performances just for fun, to see their friends and watch the entertainment. So it became a rule that no one could leave their area to attend those Lamanite Conferences unless they were taking investigators. I was obedient, had no interest to go to one of those outside my area. Well, one Sunday in Holbrook we were on our way to Stake Conference, church for that particular Sunday, but the mission president told us rather forcefully, "You know the rule: No conferences unless you're taking investigators!" I had no idea that that rule applied to stake conferences too, and I doubt it did, a totally different kind of conference, and it was not out of our area, but was where our wards went to church that day, but if the president did not want us to go to church, we would not go. So we did not go to church that day, totally miffed and bewildered. A few such unfair "talkings to" bugged me a couple of decades, but now I see them as little things. Even if misjudged, I can see that all were trying, and like a bruising hit in football, ignore the small stuff, do not be easily offended, and keep working toward the greater good for all! (11th lesson).

A UFO sighting came our way while serving in Mexican Water. August 26, 1969, six of us elders were gathering up the placement students from our three areas and taking them to meet the placement bus in Kayenta. We started gathering in the afternoon, but some were hard to find, and it was dark by the time we headed west. While driving west between Denehotso to Kayenta, a light streaked across the sky at a fantastic speed to almost look like a shooting star, from the north going south, and then it stopped on a dime. It made 3 or 4 instant starts and stops, and then hovered perhaps over Kayenta for several seconds. Then suddenly the lights went out. It was oval shape and the lights were a mix of several colors. No human could have survived such movements, and it was highly controlled. Some of us saw it, up high in the western sky, but after the lights went out, we saw no more of it, though we watched long afterwards.

Very often while we walked the landscape looking for families to visit, children would answer the door and say that their parents were not home. If we suspected otherwise, we would say, "Go ask them when they'll be home." The kids would run off and through the open door we could hear them ask. Then the responses were either scolding the kids, or silence, or sometimes the door simply closed.

A rather memorable prep-day was when the district went driving and hiking out in an uninhabited area, with miles of sagebrush, sand, rock and no people. A few wild donkeys were a brief amusement. One elder brought his guitar. When he tired of playing it, I played it awhile. Fitting a whole district in one pickup truck was the first adventure. An elder driving and two sisters filled the cab and several elders were in the back; however, there was not room for all of us in back, so 3 of us sat on the cab's roof facing forward. Elder Salmon promised to drive slow. I was on the right side of those 3 on the roof, sitting and playing whoever's guitar. Without realizing it, Elder Salmon gradually increased his speed, which was not too noticeable until a slight curvature of the road to the left sent the guitarist and guitar on a short flight to the right. While in the air, my hope was to save the guitar. The owner of the guitar later told me that he shared the same concern as he saw me airborne with his guitar. I rolled on the dirt road a couple of times, but was able to juggle the guitar while rolling such that it never touched the ground, and both elder and guitar emerged unharmed. I want to watch that one on the not-so-instant replays too. Perhaps an hour later came another curve to the left. The moment that Elder Salmon realized that it might be too fast for the very low coefficient of friction available for riders on the roof, Elder Salmon looked right and again saw Elder Stubbs airborne to the right. Luckily, I had no guitar this time, but I was headed for a rock field on the right side of the road—sizable rocks. Dirt is a much preferable landing surface than rocks; nevertheless, I was in the air long enough to see where I was headed and to pick out 4 rocks in about the right places for my two hands and two feet on each of the 4 with a quick reverse push-up to break the fall without any body part touching any rocks except the 2 hands and 2 feet on the planned rocks. Let's watch that on the not-so-instant replays too.

After 2 or 3 months, Elder White was transferred and in came Elder Max Firth from Tremonton, another good and pleasant fellow. About this time, more than a year out, the big picture began to weigh on me. The Navajo are wonderful people—quiet, reserved, and durable. And many of them believed, nodding in agreement, yet few would do something or come to church. My enthusiasm waned. But we kept on—walking about and talking about what life's about.

Some think we are pushing religion. Religion? 'Life' and 'reality' are what we are dealing with. We are not selling anything. We are trying to give it away—handing out treasure maps. And the treasures are real. One only has to do the map. Just as treasures on earth are built up by planning and doing, treasures in Heaven are the result of planning and doing. And while every good person will have a commensurate reward in yonder spheres proportionate to whatever good they do here, what kind of friends are we if we do not let others know the incomprehensibly infinite and eternal value of all God has to offer? That is what missionary work is—offering maps to infinite treasures—not peddling religion. Yet few are interested, and I should not be blamed for my area's statistical disinterest in the maps.

Worked my second winter (69-70) at Whitewater, New Mexico, south of Gallup, with Elder Felix from Springville. Elder Raymond Felix was another good, likable guy. The Art Armstrong family were good to us, lived down the road. Again, we walked about and talked about what life's about, but no new successes and few members came to church. More came to MIA; good numbers came to play basketball (chapel had a bb court). We were good to others and others good to us, but no glaring successes. Elder Felix was branch president and I was the branch clerk, and if someone came to Church, one of us talked.

Elder Felix and I did save one man's life, one winter night. We were walking home after dark and saw a man lying unconscious in the snow off the road a few feet. We walked over to him, had to work at waking him up, but he was too inebriated to walk or stay conscious more than a few seconds at a time. He would have frozen to death by morning, so we decided to carry him home. We knew him and where he lived, but we were on foot, no pickup. We made the square seat with our four forearms and carried him that way a ways, but got tired after a while. It was a fair distance to his house, probably ½ to 1 mile? Far

enough to be tiring. We ended up taking turns carrying him piggy-back as the easiest way to transport him. He did wake up periodically, recognized us, and thanked us for taking him home.

Years after my mission, I tried to look up Elder Felix but found only his obituary. I was able to contact about 4 of his children, also exceptionally good people. His daughter Amy sent me a digital copy of his missionary journal and he speaks of our Whitewater days. He said we got along well, which I was glad to read that he saw it that way too. He noted our saving the life of the friend in the snow that winter night. He also noted that I was glad to be in an area without a truck because I loved to walk. I don't remember expressing it so exuberantly, but he was exactly right. I sure liked walking better than vehicles. He remembered me running a good pace down the pine-lined road from where we lived to a half mile out, then running back, always in his sight. I had forgotten that, but his mention jogged that vague memory.

My last area was the Holbrook-Snowflake area. Walter and Jeanette Wiltbank were an impressive young family and were very good to us. I really liked Snowflake and thought it might be a good place to live, but when we moved to Blanding, I realized it was similar and maybe better, both small towns with good people and pines and mountains nearby, but Blanding was closer to family in the land northward.

Most of my mission was around and at the foot of the Chuska Mountain Range: Lukachukai on the west side, Toadlena on the east side, and Mexican Water on the north side. Later, living in Blanding most of my life, I can see the Chuska Mountains to the south.

As I look back on my mission, I would change one thing. Instead of putting pressure on myself to 'change the world', I would simply enjoy doing what I could each day, but not worry so much about what I had no control over—others' choices. Try not to feel burdened by lack of success / numbers, but still do what I could and enjoy the goodness of people, the scenery, being alive, able to walk, and be happy.

Coming Home to More Crossroads

Arriving home in June 1970, I felt a little lost, as many do, and wondered what to do for a next step. What did I want to be when I grew up? Did I want to grow up? A few years of odd jobs as farmhand, janitor, and other things instilled in me a desire at age 17 to be a math teacher and a track coach. After four more years of maturity, at age 21, I wanted to be a garbage collector and a rodeo clown. Lofty goals, I know, and my folks thought my maturity was going backwards too. But my explorations were still ongoing. I eventually did 3 of the 4—worked as a garbage collector, taught math, coached track—enjoyed them all for a time each. It may be just as well that I never became a rodeo clown, in spite of Von White's encouragement: "You could do it too: you're fast enough and you're crazy enough." I had no interest in riding bulls, being thrown in the air with no control over trajectory or landing spot, like on a horn or under hoof, but I was drawn to the idea of running and dodging on the ground, where I had control over where I went; and occasionally saving a life. Then I remember my Sunday School teacher in Pomona, Brother Johnson (Frankie's dad), telling us about when he and a friend were rodeo clowns, and one rodeo, his friend was killed. So, by not fitting rodeo clown into my life, maybe the life I saved was my own.

I thought I would like to find a job somewhere in the Southwest, near the people I had grown to care about. Dad was good to go on a trip with me. It was summer, he was out of school, so we actually drove through Blanding and other areas, and ended up hiking down to the Havasupai village at the bottom of the Grand Canyon and back up. That was memorable. But no job was obtained. We returned home to Provo, and after a few more days I began planning another trip to Arizona to look for work some more.

Decisions, Decisions: The Bicycle Trip

I knew where I wanted to work, but the place was 400 miles away. Since I did not have a car, I decided to ride a bicycle. But I did not have a bicycle either. So I bought my brother, Eric's. This was not a 10-speed, nor even a 3-speed, but a regular old one-speed, balloon-tired, backyard bicycle.

I left Provo Friday, July 17, 1970, at 2 p.m. pedaling southeast. During the first 2 miles, I found pedaling the rusted one-speed more difficult than anticipated. Stopping where 9th East joins Highway 89

toward Springville, I paused to consider whether such an undertaking was within the limits of sanity. I had two cans of food, a plastic bag of wheat, and three books in a small pack on my back, a poncho and blanket tied behind the seat, a canteen of water on the handlebars, a little money, and 398 miles to go. After contemplating the possible hazards and carefully reconsidering the practicality of such a venture, I made a very mature decision: What the heck! What have I got to lose? And pushed off into the unknown future.

By 6 p.m. I had very laboriously pumped 40 miles uphill and finally stopped to rest at the rest stop (now removed) 7 miles before Soldier Summit. The longer I rested, the more convinced I was that that was enough for one day. My heart was pounding as never before, even after 12 or 18-mile runs. As I prepared for the night, I noticed a few clouds overhead. So I lay down under one of the concrete picnic tables to protect myself from possible rain. Secure in the knowledge that vertical moisture could not touch me, I fell asleep. Little did I know that an automatic sprinkling system turned on in the middle of the night. By the time I awoke, gathered my stuff, and got out of the sprinkler, I was soaked. Unbelievable! Who would ever guess that a puny patch of grass, 40 miles from civilization, would have an automatic sprinkling system set to erupt in the wee hours. After so carefully preparing for rain from above, I was drenched by sprinklers shooting in from the side. I lay down on the hillside, but after shivering an hour, I decided that I may as well burn energy pumping a bicycle as burn energy shivering. So I resumed the uphill climb 4 a.m.

While approaching the 7500-foot Soldier Summit in the early morning twilight, I strained a tendon in my right knee. The two-day uphill exertion on the uni-geared contraption were more than the tendon could bear, and my right leg is not as strong as my left, as is the case with most right-handed people. That particular tendon was necessary for any downward pressure, so the right leg was entirely useless and merely rested on the pedal. So now I was pedaling **with a limp**, one leg doing all the work.

Would I be able to complete the remaining 350 miles with one leg? Home was only 50 miles the other direction. Besides, one leg doing all the work may increase the likelihood of injury to the remaining good leg. However, the fact that the next 30 miles to Price were downhill favored the decision to continue. After all, did I want to quit with the very first downhill stretch right in front of me? Decisions! So the next 200 miles, from Soldier Summit to Monticello, were pedaled with one leg on a one-speed bicycle.

I reached Price in the late morning, bought some food, ate, and rested awhile. In the early afternoon, I started for Green River. Some miles outside of Wellington, I came upon a Navajo fellow hitchhiking in the same direction. It was a terribly hot day, and his distance from town meant he had been under the sun for some time. I stopped, chatted, and gave him some water, but could hardly offer him a ride; then I continued into the hot desolate expanse between Wellington and Green River. He drank more of my canteen than I had planned, so in a couple of hours I was hurting for water.

In spite of the heat, I felt strong as the one good leg powered a surprising pace over the next 30 miles to Woodside. At that station (closed now), some 20 miles north of Green River, I learned that the temperature was 104 degrees Fahrenheit. I also learned that they did not have any drinking water, only soda pop. How repulsive soda pop is when really thirsty!

Shortly after leaving Woodside, I "hit the wall"—a marathoning term for when all of the blood sugar is used up and the body must burn body tissue to continue. After a while, I stopped by the side of the road wondering how I was going to reach Green River in such a condition. It was getting dark, I had no food and no water, and not a particle of energy left in me. While pondering my plight, a pickup truck stopped. With mixed reluctance and gratitude, I accepted the 20-mile lift to Green River.

Since the next day was Sunday, I went to church such as I was (and you can imagine how I was), and spent the afternoon resting in the shade on the banks of the Green River, studying Spanish and swatting mosquitoes. That night I awoke about two or three in the morning and could not go back to sleep. Having a single blanket to serve as both mattress and cover did not lend itself to sound sleeping, and if I could not sleep, I may as well be pedaling. So I headed for Crescent Junction in the wee hours of Monday morning.

A few miles outside of Green River a policeman stopped me to find out who I was and what I was doing out on such a desolate stretch of road in the middle of the night on a bicycle. I often asked myself

the same question. He said that he hoped he did not find me splattered all over the highway before daylight. "My sentiments exactly," I thought to myself.

I reached Moab about dawn, at which time I had no problem falling asleep on the sand near the Colorado River. When I awoke, I rode into town and enjoyed a leisure brunch. I was not in any hurry to leave Moab in the heat of the day because I had noticed the bike pedaled more easily at night. I surmised that was probably due to the fact that cooler temperatures shrink the moving metal parts, thus decreasing the friction and allowing the machine to function with less effort in the cool of night. Nevertheless, I could not waste all the daylight hours, so after resting most of the hot midday hours, I painfully remounted in the late afternoon.

I reached La Sal Junction about dusk. After eating and resting, I continued in the dark toward Monticello. I pedaled with fair strength late into the night. Pedaling up Peter's Hill with one good leg was challenging on the uni-geared rust bucket! A police officer in a pickup stopped by me near the end of my laborious climb up Peter's Hill. The kind soft-spoken man offered a ride and a comfortable bed in the county jail. That sounded good, and it was easier to accept a ride the 2nd time. Once at the jail, he gave me a can of orange juice—the most delicious stuff my taste buds ever experienced. I was nearly overcome by the exquisiteness of the taste. I did not feel anything trickle down my throat. It seemed as if it was immediately absorbed through the membranes of my mouth before it ever reached my stomach. I had not realized how desperately my system needed replenishing. As the door clanged shut behind me, he assured me that someone would let me out in the morning.

The next morning, I sat in my cell wondering if I was going to be let out. Did the officer bother to tell anyone else that I was only an innocent cyclist, who came to pass (through Monticello), and was not the troublemaker who started the brawl at the bar last night? Would I have an 'identification crisis'? In due time justice triumphed, and I was sentenced to an additional 150 miles on that painful bicycle seat. While pedaling away from Monticello, I noticed that the strained tendon in my knee had healed sufficiently to allow my right leg to help a little with the pedaling. However, with good news came bad news. In Blanding, my poncho was stolen from my bike while I was in the old Parley Redd food store buying food to eat (later changed to Ace Hardware). Little did I know that I would move to Blanding four years later and live there most of my life. Years later, I again met Thomas Bert Giles, the kind patrolman who gave me the comfortable bed in the San Juan County jail in Monticello, that Monday night, July 20, 1970.

At the junction below White Mesa, another decision arose. The bridge and highway west of Bluff to Mexican Water did not exist at that time. So the distances to Mexican Water by way of Kayenta or Teec Nos Pos were both over 100 miles on paved roads, while a shortcut on dirt roads would be only about 30 miles. So I crossed the foot bridge east of Bluff to take the 30-mile short-cut from Bluff, Utah, to Mexican Water, Arizona, on the dirt roads of the Navajo Reservation. I was somewhat familiar with the area between.

I also decided to wait until dark. I did not want the local Navajos to hurt themselves falling to the ground with laughter at the sight of a crazy Bilagaana (White Man) pedaling a bicycle out in the middle of nowhere. Besides, it was hot. So I spent the afternoon resting in the shade of the bushes on the banks of the San Juan River, studying Spanish and swatting mosquitoes.

About dusk I crossed the foot bridge east of Bluff and headed south-southwest on a dirt road. Within an hour the night was pitch black. No streetlights here! After dark, the road seemed to dwindle into a sandy path, and then only sand. I must have missed the road I might have seen in daylight. Unable to ride in the deep sand, I pushed the bicycle for 2 or 3 hours. Pushing a bike with gear in eight inches of sand is comparable to pushing a Volkswagen on pavement. I perspired profusely; my clothes were drenched with sweat. I knew of Biwo'adin's spring some 15 or more miles from the foot bridge, and I thought I was headed in the right direction, but I was not sure as an overcast sky kept me from checking directions by the stars or familiar landmarks on the horizon. By midnight I had lost so much water from perspiration that the thought of stopping before reaching water was unbearable. I continued on, losing even more water. Eventually I decided that it was unwise to keep pushing that bike until I got some water. I hid the bike in some sagebrush and continued walking with only the empty canteen, intending to return for the bike after finding the well.

Walking was much easier than pushing a bike, and the flow of perspiration slowed while only having to walk. Walking 2 more hours, I still did not find the water. It was in the wee hours of the morning, and I was deliriously thirsty and so tired. The thirst said 'go on' while the numbing exhaustion said 'collapse and sleep'—another among several decisions. I continued awhile longer, trying to decide which to do.

The most disturbing aspect of the whole situation was that in the black of night, one could walk in large circles without realizing it, and if I was going the wrong direction or if I had passed the well, then I could be walking further away from the water instead of toward it. What a horrifying thought! But it was good reason to stop and sleep until dawn, at which time I would be able to see. On the other hand, if I waited until dawn to continue my search, the rising sun would make whatever distance remained more difficult than that distance would be during the cool of the night. Decisions, decisions! The thought of going to sleep without water did not appeal to me either. In fact, I wondered if sleep was even possible while subject to such thirst. But I finally decided to stop. After I lay down on the sand, sleep came quickly.

I awoke early and to my great surprise and joy, in the faint grayness of early dawn, I could see the trees surrounding Biwó'adin's well only a quarter mile ahead. Biwó'adin (meaning 'his teeth are gone') was a likable and remarkable old gentleman. I drank my fill of water, filled the canteen, spent the morning retrieving the bike, finished the wheat in my pack, and rested the rest of that long hot day in the shade of the trees by the well, studying Spanish and … but not too many mosquitoes this time.

I started on my journey again at dusk, on a new and real (dirt) road heading south from the well. However, this night I tired quickly, because I had eaten very little over the past 48 hours. I stopped and slept half the night, then started again. I passed Mexican Water Trading Post at dawn Thursday morning. As they would not open for a couple of hours yet, I decided to continue toward Rock Point. About halfway between Mexican Water and Rock Point, I began to feel faint. My lightheadedness worsened to the point that I had to keep my head low. If I sat up, I would begin to pass out. For five miles I rested my head on my hands folded on the handlebars, looking down and following the white line on the right side of the road with an occasional glance upward to make sure nothing was in front of me. When I arrived at Rock Point Trading Post, it was all I could do to get off my bike and remain conscious as I walked very unsteadily into the trading post and bought three bananas, a quart of orange juice, and a loaf of bread. After eating and resting an hour, I continued on. What a difference a little food made! I sped the remaining 30 miles to Lukachukai with considerable strength and relief after the much-needed nourishment.

As I stood in the old Greasewood Trading Post south of Lukachukai that afternoon, I remember how moved I was at the beauty and wonder of people—ordinary people who normally would not have impressed me. I had hardly seen human beings for a week, and it took a couple of hours for the awe and reverence to wear off. I have often thought since that time: How sad it is that we do not see each other in that light all the time! I weighed 148 that day at the trading post, 12 less than the 160 in high school.

Amidst my reflections, I also found it amusing that I had traveled the first 300 miles in 3 days of pedaling (half of Friday, Saturday, Monday, Tuesday morning), and then took a 30-mile shortcut that took 2 days (Tuesday night, Wednesday, and Thursday morning). After enjoying a peace and good feeling at the end of the journey, I learned that hired help was not needed there.

The next morning, Friday, July 24th, I pedaled the 45 miles back to Mexican Water. Only one mile before Mexican Water, the rear tire blew out—actually 'blew up'! It was an explosion. The tire and tube were shreds of rubber. I hid the bike in the bushes once again and walked the last mile to Mexican Water Trading Post, where I was offered a job working for Don Reeves and with Joe Wright and Dwight McGee, who were all good to work with.

Mexican Water Trading Post

The Mexican Water establishment had a trading post, a gas station, and a restaurant. So the work involved being cashier, stocking shelves, pumping gas, fixing flat tires, keeping the restaurant in change, weighing and buying livestock, buying and selling rugs, playing butcher if he did not show up that day,

etcetera, etcetera. The variety was nice, if a tad overwhelming at times, and I did okay at everything but 2 salient deficiencies. I was not a mechanic. I did not even care for driving cars, let alone fixing them. I did not get a driver's license until 17, a year after most, because I liked walking or running wherever, but when others thought I should, I got a license. So when tourists came by with cars acting up and hoped for repair services comparable to Phoenix or Farmington, they were out of luck, especially if I was on duty. Another Navajo man ran the station most of the time, and he knew more than I did, but he was hardly a one-man repair shop either. Nevertheless, on his days off, I was the one pumping gas, and any tourists with car troubles should have hoped to break down somewhere else.

The other area where inexperience might be costly was in buying rugs from the Navajo weavers. If I offered too little for the rug, the weaver would get mad and take her rug down the road to another trading post. If I paid out too much for the rug, then we would lose money, being unable to sell it for more than cost. So learning to estimate the value of a rug was crucial, and I did not have years for developing the judgment that Don had. So I figured out a formula. The trading post floor had tiles one-foot square. So one night, after we were closed, I measured all 150 rugs by putting them on the tiles, figured their square footage, added up the total and the price total, divided the price total by the square-foot total and figured the average dollar-per-square-foot price of all the rugs. Then I looked at quality: if average, then sure enough, its price was at or near my average price per square foot. If a little better quality or a little less, then sure enough, the price was a little more or a little less than the average I had figured. Knowing the ratio of buying price to selling price, I did the math in my head, and it worked. The next day it fell on me to buy a couple of rugs. I would set the blanket on the floor—they thought that was my way of looking at it, and yes, I was judging its quality too, but also measuring its size against the tiles—then I would do the math in my head (e.g., $2\ ^{2/3}$ x 3 ¼ = 8/3 x 13/4 = 26/3 = $8\ ^{2/3}$ square feet, then times price per square foot), adjust up or down for quality if needed, and offer a price. They seemed happy, and Don Reeves came by to check the prices that I had bought the rugs for and saw that my formula worked well. A few days later, Dwight became impressed, asked me for the formula, and started using it too. Don's confidence in my formula was such that I became the one most regularly sent to buy rugs. So that weakness became a strength, math is of use, and thinking can improve performance (lesson 10 again).

With my first paycheck, I bought a car for $25 from the Aaron and Bonita Card family, wonderful people. It ran well, taking me back and forth between Provo and Mexican Water. Gas was 25¢ a gallon. When I told one station attendant to fill it up (old days before self-service), he looked at the car, then asked, "Are you sure you want to invest that much in it?"

When changing the car's oil, I made use of a ditch behind the trading post. One time I was lying in the ditch to start changing the oil, when it was put in my mind 'get out of the ditch'. I got out from under the car, and stood wondering why I was supposed to. A second later, the dirt of one side of the ditch caved in and the back wheels fell into the ditch. A strong reminder to listen to the whisperings of the Spirit (12^{th} lesson); otherwise, I would have been in a world of hurt or dead.

During my days at Mexican Water Trading Post, the trader at Rock Point Trading Post had a community basketball team that played in tournaments all over, and he wanted me to play for his team. I had improved, but was still not a superb basketball player, but was decent and could run and jump. I often try for some semblance of humility (nice try?), and if occasional accomplishments encourage me to think I am something, then I stop and think how little, weak, and ditsy we are compared to God's infinite love, humility, power, and wisdom, and remind myself of the Messiah's suggestion of humbling self vs exalting self (Matthew 23:12; Luke 14:11). But an occasional detour from humble street to tell it like it is should not be thought too alarming for one so regularly imperfect as I, especially for a bro bri brag-a-thon.

About age 17, while playing basketball at church or wherever, I began noticing that I could get off the ground quite well. I could only jump 24" (two feet) from a standstill, but twice that on a running jump. I figured the 3 years of high-jumping in childhood and the running and the uphill power-sprints over the years were combining for an ability later in life. In the LTM, they let us missionaries play basketball 3 times a week. Observers said that I would go in for a lay-up with my arm stretched out horizontal, yet as

high as the basket. I was nearly looking eye-level at the rim. As Navajos loved to play basketball, it was an occasional part of our mixing with the people in the mission field too, and was the common form of exercise at district meetings among elders. During those games, two elders would sometimes stand shoulder to shoulder to block me out, but with a running jump, I could jump over their shoulders, and with legs slightly bent, my feet would go past their ears. I did that many times. Often people would say my head was higher than the basket. I was never taller than 5'10 ¾" (5' 11" rounded off), so if the top of my head was higher than the basket, I was getting more than 4 feet off the ground, and with a bend of the legs, I could jump over others' shoulders. My hang time was such that one time I was running down the court, jumped about the foul line, shot while in the air, the ball hit the back rim and bounced back toward me, and I was still in the air to get the rebound and shoot a second time in the same jump. I weighed 160 as a senior in high school, bounced up to 180 in basic training, back down afterwards, and up once again on my mission, in an area where we drove instead of walked, but after the bicycle trip, I weighed 150 or 155, and the 400 miles of pumping the pedals worked the jumping muscles. So during those Mexican Water days, I was 21, at peak strength and maturity, doing uphill sprints on the highway east of Mexican Water trading post every day, and weighed less than ever, which allowed the same leg power to put me even higher. During one game in particular, I was probably getting 4 and a half feet off the ground that night. Barry McGee said, "Everyone else jumps up then comes down, but you jump up and just keep going up." In any case, for doubters, we can watch together the not-so-instant replays in yonder spheres. A minor downside is that in order to do those heights, I had to pound the floor so hard that my left heel often felt hammered after a game, such that **a slight limp** was more comfortable, but not necessary.

Anyway, I played for the Rock Point team. Tournaments were quite regular, and the coach loved watching me jump … and never gave up hope that I might do something else right too, or so I surmised by his occasional suggestions like "maybe you could hold onto the ball next time, too." Good plan, coach, let's do that play next. I am exaggerating on the poor play. I was not that bad—or not always.

After six months, the novelty of working at a trading post began to wear off, and attractive, temple-eligible girls my age in Mexican Water were as numerous as the palm trees. I explained to Don Reeves my wish to return to Provo. He understood, was accommodating, paid me my latest wages, and I passed by Monument Valley's *Valley of the Gods* headed for the valley of the goddesses (Utah Valley).

I dated some but with changed perspective. After mournfully waiting and hoping 2 years for a change of heart, a change in her heart, but no happen, that 2-year sorrow changed my heart. As soon as it became evident that a girl was not interested, my disappearance from her life was instant. No more hanging around or hoping, I was promptly gone. Whether an improved perspective or not, no more being tethered in tunnel vision. Probably only one girl noticed the abrupt break, and perhaps I should have talked it over before exit, but I had no idea how to talk about such things then … as if I do now. Such a conversation may have been comical in retrospect, if not during. But life was soon to change.

My friend Mark Nordgren was home from his mission by then, so we went to a 10-stake dance January 28th, 1971. A 10-stake dance has a lot of people.

Silvia Canelo from Argentina was first noticed by Mark. He danced with her first, pointed her out to me, and then I danced with her a few times. I was learning Spanish, by myself from books, and wanted to have my pronunciation checked by a native speaker. I could learn the words and the grammar from books, but a native speaker to answer a few questions would be nice. So I asked her if she would go with me to the Wilkinson Center some evening for a Spanish lesson and ice cream. She said yes, and told me her phone number. I had no pencil or paper, but put it in my head. Not a safe place, but it worked that time. Years later she said that she was sure I would forget the number, not call, and she would never see me again. But I did remember, called, and we went to the Wilkinson Center, Jan 30.

She was thinking this might be a part-time job. In Argentina and Europe, private language lessons are for pay, like piano lessons. It never occurred to me that she might be thinking pay. I thought an ice cream cone was pretty good pay. Actually, paying my life's earnings to raise our family was not bad pay

for a Spanish lesson either. Anyway, I brought my Spanish books, we sat in the Wilkinson Center, she answered some of my questions, pronounced a few words for me, and then checked my pronunciation as I read a story to her out of my Spanish reader. My pronunciation was good, and she thought that I was a returned Spanish-speaking missionary, and that I was only pretending to be a dunce. No, that's for real.

Silvia had just arrived in the U.S. 5 months earlier and was in the process of learning English, while I was learning Spanish. So neither of us really knew the language of the other very well—a tad taxing on the communication skills—but now decades later, our communication skills are coming right along. In fact, we actually do just fine many days, and when our kids are around, they occasionally translate for us what the other really meant and that helps. Regardless, we are mostly happy.

I later learned that she was scared of the American dating system and would not have accepted if I had asked her for a date, but a "Spanish lesson" seemed okay. After the lesson and an ice cream cone, I took her home. The next day (Sunday), Mayva Moon called, my Mom answered, and I learned that Silvia had left her purse in my car. I went out and looked. There it was! I took it over, and the Kay and Mayva Moon family that she was living with invited me to come along to an art show in Springville, so Silvia and I went with them to the art show. Thursday Feb 4, was our first "date" one week after meeting. We went to a classical guitar concert at BYU's de Jong Concert Hall. The Tabajaras brothers were fantastic guitarists, a pair of Native American brothers from Brazil—very impressive. Some performances are still online, though old, but the Bach pieces and "Flight of the Bumblebee" are fun listens.

I learned over the next few weeks that she is an amazing person and would be a pioneer for her posterity, with an incredible story. She was raised by her grandparents, but thought they were her parents. Her grandmother died when Silvia was 9. That was hard. Her grandfather remarried when she was 11. That was hard. The new step-grandmother was mean to Silvia. That was hard. Silvia spent much time at neighbors' houses for peace and food. The step grandmother also told Silvia that those were not her parents, but her grandparents, and that she should go live with her mother. Hearing it was hard enough, then it was arranged (age 14) and being there was much harder. She and her half-sisters worked hard in the house for the stepfather's home paper business. Starting at 5 a.m. many mornings, they worked long days, jumped when he said jump, bore with his temper and with being confined to something resembling a child-slave-labor camp. After 2 years, she prayed to her Heavenly Father for deliverance. The next day she learned of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Silvia and her sister began reading the Book of Mormon, but the stepfather was angry about it and forbade it. So they took turns reading under their respective blankets with a flashlight at night, after everyone else had gone to bed. She could feel that it was true; she knew it. Yet her stepfather was violently opposed to the LDS Church, brought her anti-Mormon literature, told her many lies, and said she could choose between guitar lessons or church. The next time she came back from church, her guitar was smashed and splintered along the walk way. She knew that she could not stay in the Church and stay in that house. To make a long story short, she received much help from Above, and planned her escape. She ended up in a Catholic convent, told the other girls that she would be out soon, but they told her, "No, no one gets out of here early" (before age 18). The nuns tried persuading her back to Catholicism, but she nearly converted one of the nuns. That did it! She was out! A series of miracles eventually led to her living with Milton and Barbara Bissegger, a generous LDS family in the ward who took her in. She lived with them from age 16 to 21. When Bisseggers returned to the United States, she came with them. Milton Bissegger and Kay Moon had been missionary companions in Argentina, so it was arranged that she stay with the wonderful Kay and Mayva Moon family in Orem, while Silvia went to Orem High School to learn English in hopes of going to BYU someday. That is where I come in.

She was discouraged, wondering what would become of her if her student visa was denied. She had no home in Argentina to return to. When people asked what she wanted for Christmas, she would answer: a boy with a car. When I came along, she decided the boy was okay, but that she should have been more specific about the car. By then I had bought a red Chevy for $75 dollars, three times what I paid for my first car. Talk about upward movement! They both ran well, but neither was much to look at.

O yes, and I had a row of spare tires in the back seat. Impressive, indeed! At the Mexican Water service station I had access to all the old tires to be thrown away, so I patched up the best ones and used them for spare tires. Since they were old, they did not last all that long. In fact, I found that one spare tire was not always enough to go from Mexican Water to Provo and back, so I put 2 spare tires in back, then 3. By the time I met Silvia, I had 4 spare tires in the back seat. Yeah, she thought that was pretty neat too.

We dated about a month and we cannot remember any magic moment of truth when I popped the suspense-filled question and she answered, but we started talking something along the lines of marriage, we are pretty sure, though we did not know each other's language yet. After talking about marriage, we exchanged what was the first kiss for both of us a month before marrying, figuring we should practice a little before having to kiss across the altar in front of everyone. Now, if I was going to be supporting a family, I needed a job. I wanted to live among the Navajo, so in March I returned to the reservation and got a job at the Thunderbird Trading Post on the east side of Chinle, Arizona.

In the meantime, Silvia innocently went to Immigration to explain her plans to marry and ask what to do to change her immigration status to permanent resident. That sent Immigration into a tizzy with efforts to deport her. Her application for a student visa was immediately denied and a threat of deportation was mailed to her. Silvia, Mom, Mayva and others investigated and found that there was basically only one way to guarantee preventing deportation: they could not deport the spouse of a U.S. citizen.

Meanwhile, back at the trading post, I was dragging through another 12-hour day when Mom called Thursday, March 25th, to explain the latest developments. The only way to guarantee Silvia's not being deported was to get married. So instead of looking to a distant future, we pulled that future right up to the present. I would work the next day, Friday, then drive home, do our blood tests Saturday morning (required 3 days beforehand then), get our interviews Sunday, and be sealed in the Salt Lake Temple Tuesday morning, March 30th, two months after we met. A tad tiny in timeframe, but we were making good progress learning each other's language. After all, the government was on our shoulders. (In a different way than Isaiah meant for The Prince of Peace: the right of governing was on His shoulders.)

Hearing I was back in the area, the Rock Point trader and basketball coach had re-enlisted me onto his team again, and we were scheduled to play two games Friday night after work, in a tournament. If we won both games, we would play the championship game Saturday. I decided to play the 2 Friday night games, and then drive Friday night to Provo, for our blood-drawing appointment Saturday morning. Knowing the coach would be upset, I decided not to tell him that I could not play Saturday, if I did not have to. Only if we won the first two games would I have to. We won the first game. After 8 pm the 2nd game started. At 10 pm Friday night, we were victorious, due to my blasted winning basket. So I had to tell him that I was leaving that hour for marriage preliminaries. He was usually a good-natured fellow, so I think he was only pretending to be madder than a hornet: "I've never heard of such a stupid idea! You need to get married like you need a hole in the head," is all I recall of his parting marital advice.

I had worked 12 hours, played two basketball games, drove all night 450 miles from Chinle to Provo, via Tees Nos Pos (no Bluff-to-Mexican-Water road yet), pulled into Utah Valley at daylight, picked up Silvia, then drove to the hospital to give blood. I was reassuring Silvia that it would not hurt too much, but as soon as a little blood came out of me, I felt light-headed and she steadied me. The 12 hours of work, 4 of basketball, and driving all night made a little blood loss or the last draw be the last straw.



Brian's favorite picture of Silvia, shortly after marriage

My parents and I were getting ready to leave for the temple about 5 a.m. when Silvia called. She asked me if I was sure I wanted to marry her. After my 'yes' she said, "I just thought I'd check and make sure, because if you had changed your mind, I was going back to bed." She had heard stories of people changing their minds at the altar.

Silvia and Marriage (1971 - forever) and BYU (1971-1974)

We were married Tuesday, March 30, 1971, in the Salt Lake Temple. (Provo Temple not built yet.) Darrel William Stubbs and Harold Kay Moon were witnesses. Wonderful, humble, kind Mark Nordgren and Scott Argyle were the best men at the reception. Silvia and I drove to Chinle where I worked at Thunderbird Trading Post. My 2nd or 3rd day of work after marrying, Silvia was watching me burn garbage in the fire pit (one of my duties) and wondered (she said it more nicely, I paraphrase): Why would the Lord give such brains to someone so stupid as to not want to use them and go to school? That evening's conversation had me partially inclined to think about the possibility of maybe going to school. See, she is good for me already. Just days into marriage, she already changed my direction for the better.

Sometimes people asked about our interracial marriage. Who? Us? We are both Germanic, both Celtic, both Roman, and both Ephraim—we are distant cousins 4 different ways. (See in *Morsels for the Mind*, "The Minorities and the Mixed … and No One Is Left, Right?") Others might phrase it differently and ask about our culturally mixed marriage. I suppose we do come from different cultures, yet my answer is that each family has its own culture, so all marriages are culturally-mixed marriages. Even in the same family, persons differ tremendously. My own family might think ***I*** am from a different culture—certainly a different mold. More important is the kind of person one marries. Someone kind and reasonable, responsible and capable of raising and/or providing for a family, with priorities founded in the Maker of all things good, Who alone can make a marriage last forever, if we can make it last this life.

We returned to Provo. For the summer I did roofing and was still trying to straighten out the complications of my military obligations. After getting a job at Mexican Water Trading Post, I was still in the Provo unit, so every month I had to drive from Arizona back to Provo for monthly weekend drills, etc. That got old, so I looked for a closer unit. The closest unit to Mexican Water was one in Farmington,

New Mexico. So I applied to transfer to the Farmington, NM unit. The quickness of army paper work had me in the Farmington unit just about the time I left the trading post and moved back to Provo. So while in Arizona, I drove to Provo, and by the time I was back in Provo, I had to drive to New Mexico for weekend drills for some months. The bright spot was that gas was 25 cents a gallon in those days.

That New Mexico guard unit had summer camp in El Paso, Texas. Then campus riots erupted at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque during summer camp 1971. We were called to convoy to Albuquerque to guard buildings against the rioters. These were not peaceful anti-war demonstrations, but war-like anti-war demonstrations. We were divided and assigned to protect various buildings, as Molotov cocktails blew up here and there, rocks thrown at us, etc. We had our bayonets fixed on our rifles, but were given no ammunition after the Kent State tragedy. The military being assigned to defend without bullets seemed a tad tonto. We could not even throw the rocks back. Presumably the crowd did not know that we did not have bullets, though they likely figured it out, as they did not seem very afraid of us. Nevertheless, pointing our bayoneted rifles toward the crowd kept most at bay, but not all. A few stupids grabbed bayonet blades and cut their hands as the soldiers simply pulled their rifle back. Their college educations evidently skipped the lesson on "bayonets are sharp." At 10 yards, dodging rocks is not easy when dozens fly at once. Some guardsmen went down. Despite some injuries, all survived. The building to which I was assigned was not attacked, but I could see the action at the nearby buildings.

Summer was the last chance to apply for BYU's fall semester, and I often procrastinate things I am not excited about, especially paper work. So Silvia asked Rita to get the BYU application forms, and Silvia, Rita, and Mom had the papers all filled out when I came home from work one day, and all I had to do was sign on the lines. I looked at the papers, thought awhile, then said, "Okay, I'll try college, if I can take whatever classes I want the first semester, and not start with general ed requirements." After shrugs of agreement from the support team, I signed, then registered for Hebrew, Egyptian, and calculus, and thoroughly enjoyed that first semester. The next semester I took the second semester of Hebrew and Egyptian; and I wanted to take more Hebrew, and add Spanish and Arabic and Navajo and German. After completing all that, I had some momentum and nothing better to do, so I continued on and basically completed a BA in 3 years. I worked my way through school with night jobs, such as janitorial jobs and the graveyard shift of an all-night service station. I had told the Navajo people for 2 years that the Book of Mormon was about their ancestors, and I wanted to find out if any language evidence aligned.

Now that I was attending BYU, I could run for BYU. That fall of 1971, BYU had a varsity cross-country team and a junior varsity team, and any newcomer not on scholarship automatically started on the JV. I was working all night, going to school all day and getting 3 to 4 hours of sleep each 24. I should have known, but had it quickly confirmed that one cannot train and run on a university cross-country team on 3 hours sleep a night. I had to work, for I had a family, no scholarship, and had to support us with my part-time minimum-wage jobs. Nevertheless, I ran with the team for 2 weeks. During that 2 weeks on JV were 2 races—a 5-mile race around Provo and a 2-mile race on the track—and I won both. Furthermore, the guys that took 2nd and 3rd places behind me in those races were on the varsity by the end of the season. So I was good enough to run for BYU, but BYU always had outstanding, often internationally ranked runners such that I would have been about middle of the pack, not one of the best. Yet the first 5-mile race is worth telling as a result of running hills in high school. The JV coach started us at the Fieldhouse, and all the wannabees with hearts set on proving themselves took off at a very good pace. Now these were the best from high schools all over the nation, so it was no jog-along pace. It took effort to keep up, but I did keep up, about in the middle of the pack. However, after a couple of miles, the route turned north up 9th East, climbing the hill that goes up the southeast side of where the Provo temple would be. As the pack began that long uphill climb, I noticed myself moving up in the pack without putting out any more effort. In fact, soon I was ahead of the pack and continued pulling away as we ran up that hill. Reaching the top of the hill at the mouth of Rock Canyon, I had an 8 or 10-yard lead, and simply kept it the rest of the race and won by about that margin. A week later was a 2-mile race on the track; I won that too, mainly due to being able to outkick all the other front runners the last 200 yards, but the others came closer that

time. However, I could not do the 12 to 18-mile cross-country workouts on 3 hours sleep a night. I was running myself into the ground, and having to support a family, I called my college running career done.

Sometime that winter I got a bad case of strep throat. With a temperature of 107, I was supposed to be dead or delusional, according to some, but it actually felt nice and warm—cozy, comfy, and warm. A later medical investigation into Mozart's death cited strep throat as the cause; it can be fatal untreated.

Hugh Nibley was a world-renowned scholar, knew 15 languages, etc. Taking Egyptian from him was a wonderful, challenging, interesting experience. He talked so fast and at such a level that I (and all) had to concentrate to catch half of what he said. After a year, I could catch 80-90%, but still not all. Thirty attended the first day, but numbers dropped quickly, and only 5 of us finished the semester. Only 3 of us finished the 2nd semester: a senior, a graduate student, and freshman me. To this day I thoroughly enjoy studying Egyptian when I can, but have not had much time to devote to it given the 100 other languages that I must study or deal with to do my research.

When I mentioned to Hugh Nibley that I would also take Hebrew, he said, "Take Modern Hebrew, and you'll be able to read circles around the Biblical Hebrew students." I did as he suggested and found he was right when I later took a Biblical Hebrew class also. Our Modern Hebrew teacher, Gabriel Tabor, was a lovable Jewish fellow, from somewhere in Europe, but had lived in Israel many years. He used to say that living in Israel is an art *and* a science. I loved studying Hebrew, and did so as many hours a day as I did not have to do something else, which had me doing well in the class. The 2nd semester, I got a job doing the graveyard shift 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. at an all-night service station. I picked that job because business was slow after midnight, and I got paid for studying. As soon as I had all other homework done, I would pull out my Hebrew books and for the rest of the night read Hebrew stories in the Hebrew readers I had bought. The fact that I got off work at 7 a.m. and got home about 7:30, ate something, and then tried to lie down for a few minutes before 9 a.m. Hebrew class—you can guess—means that I did not always make it to Hebrew class. It was 5 days a week, and for a stretch there, I might have averaged twice a week. Mr. Tabor would have us take turns reading and translating. As I could read and translate better than the others, Mr. Tabor was puzzled, and one day in class exclaimed, "Brian! You make a liar out of me. I tell these students: you must attend regularly to learn Hebrew. Yet you attend less than anyone, but read Hebrew better than anyone!" I explained that I had an all-night job at a station and sometimes was so tired, but what I did at that all-night job was study and read Hebrew half the night. He smiled and seemed pleased with that answer and said, "I knew there was an explanation." I got an A again 2nd semester.

The owner of the gas station went bankrupt, so I was not paid the last month or so of wages in spite of our poverty-stricken student status. Some suggested I sue, but I did not want to. I did call him a time or two, as he said he would try to pull some money together and pay me some more, and he did pay me some more one time, cannot remember whether all. Whatever our trials—

Shana was born end of spring semester, during finals week in May. Poor Silvia was in labor 36 hours before they decided natural birth would not work and took the baby C-section. Shana was amazing from the beginning—content and hardly ever cried, and a very beautiful baby. Almost every trip to the store with Shana in a shopping cart, people would stop and gasp in awe, not just "oh, so cute" kind of reaction, but "O my goodness! Let me go get my husband so he can see this baby!" We used to take her to concerts at age two, and without a peep she would sit up and attentively take it in. We wondered why everyone else did not have better control of their kids. Yes, we were the perfect parents … until Joseph was born. Then we found out that it was just Shana, not us at all.

Through her teen years, Silvia had repeatedly had the same dream of a young man she felt was to be her husband. In the dream, she always saw a young man sitting on a bed, singing and playing a guitar, and as she approached, he would start to turn around, but the dream always ended as he was turning and before she could see his face. She told Barbara Bissegger about this dream. After we were married, Barbara asked Silvia, "What about the guy in the dreams?" Silvia was perplexed. Yes, what about the guy in the dreams? Was the dream wrong or meaningless, or did she marry the wrong person? One day some months after we were married, I went to clean my things out of my parent's house. I brought the stuff to

our Provo apartment. Among the few possessions was an old guitar purchased years earlier. I began making up a song on it. Silvia heard me and came into the room as I sat on the bed singing and playing, and she recognized it as the exact picture in her dream. She came in, I turned around, just as in the dream, but this time I finished turning around, she saw my face and it was not a dream. Far from a dream some days, but I do what I can to make her happy. That particular dream was fulfilled, as many of hers are.

Dad and Mom helped us some with hospital bills. I also remember Dad's generosity at times when we were visiting their house. Dad would come home from work, notice our diaper bag in the entrance, take some bills out of his wallet and stuff them in the diaper bag. For a break from all-night jobs with intermittent pay, in the summer I got a full-time job as garbage collector for Provo City. I loved it, a dream job: good exercise lifting 50 to 80-pound cans all day (before automated trucks did the lifting), outdoors in the fresh air (if the wind was blowing the right way), and the 8-hour day was over by 1:30 (because we started at 5 a.m.), but it did not fit a school schedule.

So when school started in the fall, I returned to night jobs and to being behind on sleep. One of our apartments was just below campus. I frequently missed an 8 a.m. health class after going to bed at 4 a.m. But one time I was on my way to making it to class on time. I was running across campus. I was nearing the building. I was in the building and nearing the classroom's entrance. I made it inside the classroom door when the Star-Spangled Banner started, which plays campus wide 8 a.m. every morning. I had made it! I was so pleased, standing with hand over heart before taking a seat. But a girl standing next to me started pulling on my arm. I pulled my arm away and frowned at her. She kept pulling at my arm, so I did the finger-over-lips ssshhhh hint to be quiet while the national anthem played. But she kept tugging on my arm until I woke up and found myself lying flat on my back in bed, with hand over heart as the campus music blared through the window and as Silvia tugged on my arm trying to wake me up.

Examining out of language classes got me through BYU in 3 years without going to summer school. For example, I studied Spanish on my own, skipped 1st year and took the 2nd year class 201, and got an A. Then I got the credits for 101 and 102—8 semester hours of Spanish. I also got 8 hours of Navajo credit for passing that 201 test. I took half the Hebrew classes and got 16 credits for the ones between simply from studying on my own. In fact, I found the two-week Army Reserve summer camp each summer to be helpful. There was a little work and training, but much free time, lying under trucks while waiting for this or that. Two-thirds of the 2 weeks was waiting for something. So I kept a language book tucked in my belt under my shirt and when waits popped up, out popped my book and I studied. I came back from each summer camp with another language under my belt, so to speak, and ready to examine out of another language class. While most soldiers did not care for summer camps, I really liked them because of the several hours of study time and because I could get a good night's sleep every night.

Greg Fisher was another great friend that happened along through life. He and I worked the night janitorial shift at Deseret Industries (DI). They always hired two BYU students to clean restrooms, sweep floors, and wax and buff the floors at night when no customers were walking the floors. The 2 of us were alone in DI, except for the night watchman, a kind elderly gentleman, who could barely walk, hear, or see. The reason for hiring a watchman who could hardly see or hear remained a mystery, but he was nice, probably needed the job, and who were we to question why anyone else had a job at DI when we did too? He had a certain route he walked every so often. One of our favorite pastimes was to stand among the mannequins on his route, each doing a creative pose, to see if he would notice that 2 of the mannequins were real people and in weird poses, and not dressed in particularly stylish clothes, but he seldom noticed.

Greg and I got tired of working for minimum wage at DI, and he had read up on how to impress employers and "get any job you want," so we decided to apply at Geneva Steel in Orem, with good wages. He recommended we put on a tie, look sharp, etc. We did so, arrived at the personnel office, filled out the forms, then waited our turn to be called. When called, we both stood up, walked toward the door, each bowing slightly with a hand gesture for the other to go first, which we both accepted, and just like in the sit-coms we got stuck in the door shoulder to shoulder. We backed out and eventually got it figured out, but for some reason we did not get the jobs.

Sometime while at BYU, I worked with Robert Blair (1930-2016), a BYU linguist and wonderful man, doing field work on Kickapoo (Algic family) with native speakers in Provo. Later in life I located Dr. Blair, visited his home. Though suffering with age and health issues in a wheelchair, he was as nice as ever, had been following my Uto-Aztecan work, and was pleased to see me doing it. He is a great soul.

Silvia gave me haircuts and did fine mostly, but now and then mumbled to herself things like: "Oops!" … "O well." … "I think I can fix that?" … "Luckily hair grows back." One time she cut a sideburn too short. I had Army drill and she fixed it by painting in the sideburn with black mascara. It worked ok until standing at attention under the summer sun as black sweat ran down my cheek.

Silvia was expecting our 2nd child, due toward the end of May 1974. However, Toxemia had her blood pressure rising weekly and one evening sent it to 200+ over something, dangerously high with terrible headaches. I took her to the hospital. As monitors were hooked up to both her and the baby, the nurses, trying to get the doctor there in vain, were worried for her and the baby. Silvia prayed much that Friday night, and in the middle of the night, she felt a deep peace and stillness, and a deep beautiful voice called her initiate name, not her given name. She felt as if in a different dimension. Finally, the doctor arrived, told her the baby may be too premature to survive, but they needed to take the baby to save her. C-section was scheduled for Monday, in two days. God took charge: her water broke and later we learned that the 16 hours in the womb without the water prepared his lungs to work when born. During C-section surgery, she felt as if speeding through a tunnel toward a light—the standard description of near-death experiences—but then something stopped her, as if she hit a brick wall. After 16 hours of labor, **Joseph was born** Monday, April 22, end of spring semester, also during final exams, like Shana was. Silvia later told me of the celestial voice calling her name. I concluded that I had no idea of the real value of the one I'm going through life with, and that probably no one did. At appreciation, we are like children trying to fathom the space shuttle. We are dunces at appreciation, and sometimes I am one of the best.

The medical bills from Joseph's birth were $2400. The C-section and extra days in the hospital due to his 5-weeks-premature birth made it more than the usual $400 for a non-C-section delivery, Dr and hospital combined. Most jobs in Provo paid minimum wage, $1.60 / hour at the time. Just after Joseph was born, Greg Fisher learned about a summer job working for a plumber, digging ditches and laying sprinkler pipe, paying $2.50/hr, and $5.00/hr on federally funded jobs. I liked pick-and-shovel work, and the pay was 3 times my minimum wage jobs. We both got on, perhaps because there was no door we had to walk through. At $5.00/hr, the gross pay was $1,000 a month, deductions were about $300, so I was bringing home $700 a month. We had been living on $300 a month previously. So we continued living on $300 per month and paid $400 a month on the medical bills. We barely finished paying the medical bills and the job ended. We had hoped to enjoy a month or two of those higher wages afterwards, but the Lord provided us with sufficient for our needs and to pay off that bill and resume our "out-of-debt" status.

Facing the prospects of a seemingly endless string of minimum-wage jobs, I had an idea (that later turned into this newspaper column):

Charm and Selling

Some people have charm; the rest of us get through life as best we can. First impressions are important in selling, but you have to get to know the rest of us. As a charm-challenged chap, I never thrived at selling … perhaps because I come from a long line of shy reticent roots. At a Stubbs cousin's wedding, my cousin explained to us that her in-laws were shy and backward. Her brother thought a moment, then said what I was thinking, "More backward than us Stubbs?" As a whole, few families lay claim to social reticence more convincingly than my extended Stubbs clan. Some have married into more sparkly genes to give some lines some hope, but for the most part, the Stubbs are known as quiet, strong, shy, hard-working, hopelessly non-sparkly people. Of course, blaming one's weaknesses on genes is not recommended by motivational speakers or the mental health industry, but I try to avoid pushy people peddling perfection.

As a 10-year-old paper boy in Los Angeles, I delivered the newspapers faithfully every day. Other than this drive-by biker missing a few throws onto a roof or two, I was doing a good job. The trainer told me that I could go door to door and sell as many new accounts as I wanted, if I wanted, but he made it sound quite optional. One Saturday I tried my hand at selling new accounts to the houses between the ones I threw papers at every day. From several dozen doors, I acquired two new customers. That was enough selling to last me a long time. Months later, a newspaper manager came and spoke with my parents, explaining that they were letting me go because I was not selling new accounts. I was dumbfounded. After he left, my parents asked me about it. My quiet answer was that I did not know that I had to sell, but only deliver. I knew I could increase my paper route if I wanted to, but thought that was optional. My dad offered to go talk to them, explain the misunderstanding, and possibly get the job back, but I said if it involved selling, I was not interested.

Fourteen years later, I was a poverty-stricken college student with a family to support. I decided that spray-painting addresses on curbs could bring in a decent hourly wage. At $2 per customer and a "yes" from every 3rd or 4th house in a new subdivision, I expected that I might earn $8 per hour, big money back when $1.60 was the minimum wage, the base for most part-time jobs in a college town. I spent our last $5 on a set of stencils and a can of spray paint. I started at my mom's house, the traditional easy sale and confidence booster. Mom said, "Oh, I don't think we need that."

Undaunted, I then drove 3 or 4 miles to a new subdivision and began the door-to-door in the heat of summer. No one was home at the first few houses. Finally, a live body appeared and said she would have her husband do it. Following another empty house or two, a second lovely lady said, "O, that's a wonderful idea. I'll have to tell my son. He needs a job, and might go for a good entrepreneurial idea like that. I'll have him do it. I'm so glad you came by. Thank you soooo much for coming!" Charmed by her effusive response, I might have said, "You're welcome." I can't remember. But by now I was far enough from my car that it was time to retrieve it and drive to the next foot-work section. I walked back and found that I had locked the keys in the car. That put a damper on a dry day. I walked the 3 miles back to the house to retrieve the spare key. In the meantime, my wife was home tallying up the dollars in her head for every hour that I was gone according to the rate I had told her. Aside from already having plans for all the money that I should have made at that rate, she couldn't help but laugh when she learned what filled the hours. I grabbed the extra key and began the 3-mile walk back to the car.

A month or two later, my mom told me about this nice young man who came by with this brilliant idea of spray-painting addresses on curbs for only $4. I looked at her, then at the curb—sure enough. I reminded her that I had offered the same thing at half that price. She had forgotten. Of course, first impressions with moms are out of the question. My status as a charm-challenged chap was confirmed! Who can't sell to his mom? Only me! Then a stranger sells her the same thing at twice the price, and it's a wonderful idea! I always wondered if it was the kid of the lady whom I had given the idea to.

Nearing the End of Our School Days at BYU

Poor little Joseph cried with colic most evenings, could not be consoled nor cuddled. If arms wrapped around him, he would scream, kick and fight, so constricting was the birth process so long.

Sometime in the early 70s, Dad accidentally ran over his sister Verda's son, Paul, his nephew, my cousin. The toddler was playing in the side yard as Aunt Verda watched him, and as toddlers do, he unpredictably took off running about and happened to leave the grass and ran around the corner onto the driveway just as Dad was backing out of the garage to go somewhere. It was a terribly tragic accident. Dad and Verda picked up the unconscious 3-year-old, rushed him to the hospital, where the medical personnel worked on Paul, while Dad prayed like he had never prayed before, and after praying for some time, my father heard his deceased father's voice, John William Stubbs, say, "Darrel, this is best for Paul," and Paul passed on. For those doubting the existence of God, His role in our lives, and an afterlife, how does one explain that? And my Dad does not make up stories. God lives and so do we hereafter.

By April 1974, I was within 5 ½ credit hours of a B.A. degree and crossed paths with Lewis Singer, my LTM Navajo teacher, as he did graduate work. Silvia and I visited him and Donna. The phone rang. It was a job offer. Being an intelligent, educated, and fluent bilingual, Lewis got more job offers than he needed. That particular job was with the Division of Rehabilitation partly on the Navajo Reservation, a knowledge of Navajo being helpful. He asked if I wanted the job. As I thought about how tired I was of working for minimum wage and how tired I was of school, yes, a real job that actually paid something in the real world was appealing. I applied, got it, and we prepared to move to Blanding, Utah.

Our Move to Blanding (1974)

Silvia and I and Shana (2 ½) and Joseph (5 months) moved to Blanding, where I started working for the Utah Division of Rehabilitation as a rehab counselor September 1974. Joel Tate was the other counselor and my mentor, and Georgan Burtenshaw was our secretary—wonderful people both. One could not ask for better people to work with. We found that most people in Blanding are that way—good, down-to-earth, kind, generous people. Georgan had recently lost her husband, and in spite of sorrow, she soldiered through the days to finish raising their last children still at home.

We bought a 14' x 50' mobile home, put it in Palmer's Trailer Court, NE corner on 200 North. Steve and Adelle Lovell were our good neighbors to the north. Ron and Karen Kartchner also became good friends, with whom we enjoyed jeeping all over the county. Mr. and Mrs. Kirk Nielson, across the street were kind to us. David (and Susanne) Johnson and Terry (and Sandy) Certonio were our first home teachers, and Calvin (and Julie) Black, Elders Quorum President, and the Ike Chamberlain family—all wonderful people. In fact, the whole extended Pugh-Chamberlain clan are a choice quality of people. Blanding was a nice peaceable place, close to mountains, and full of good people. And not having to work day and night was a nice rest and temporary luxury—temporary, because after enjoying it awhile, it became the new norm and not so noticeably luxurious.

Yet with the temporary luxury, there was time for recreation, like church basketball. I was still a mediocre basketball player, but enjoyed watching Eugene Shumway, in his 30s, the fastest man at 10 yards I have ever seen. He could dart from one spot to another a few yards away faster than seemed humanly possible until you saw him do it. As for me, I am sure they were thrilled to have a new mediocre walk-on that was not exceptional except at running and jumping. And my jump was a foot less. I was now 25 ½ and had not played ball for 3 ½ years since playing for the Rock Point team. But a foot subtracted from 4-feet-plus still had me getting off the ground 3 feet, high enough for Eugene Shumway to remember and tell his son Shane Shumway (defensive safety on BYU's 1984 no. 1 team), because 20 years later, Shane told me that his dad (Eugene) told him about how high I used to jump, and that was after I had lost more than a foot of jumping ability from the 4 feet that I could do from age 17 to 22.

1975 our first New Years in Blanding, Silvia cooked two steaks for a New Year Eve party for two, as I lay down between Shana and Joseph, to show them how to lie still and fall asleep. But I was too good at it and awoke at 5 a.m., realized I had missed the party, and began looking for my steak to warm up. Silvia could hear me rummaging in the fridge and called out, "I ate both of them."

Our children were not doing much in school, because they were not in school yet. But their dad still had to finish school. I lacked 5 ½ credit hours to graduate, so I took a correspondence course for one credit hour. Needing 4 hours of elective credit, I decided to examine out of another language class. We took Friday and Monday off work, drove to Provo, I went to the bookstore to get the textbook for German 101, studied German Friday night, Saturday, some on Sunday, went to the German Dept Monday morning and examined out of first semester German. The German Dept Chair was leery of my request at first, but said, "Okay, let's give it a try." He handed me the final exam for German 101. I took it, and he corrected it and said, "Not bad! You should get at least a B." Then came the conversation part of the exam. I can learn quickly from books, but conversation takes practice, which I had not had. With a low score in

conversation, he gave me a C, which was fine. To get a 4-credit semester class done in a weekend was reward enough. Now I only lacked a ½ hour of PE credit. Having run daily since age 13 and planning to do so the rest of life, I wrote BYU a letter to that effect, and they decided that a lifetime of running could count for a ½ hour of PE credit, and my diploma arrived in the mail. I had graduated from BYU!

Army, mission, trading post, and marrying, with little time at home since high school had me nearly losing track of my siblings. For a capsulated update, Eric, the one nearest me, has the most mentions in this life history, was a good runner, not quite as good a violinist, and served a mission in Peru. Rita became ever more beautiful, kept up as the best musician of us, still plays violin well, and we all helped direct traffic when her multiple boyfriends showed up in overlapping succession. Alan was the best athlete—all-region linebacker in football, all-region wrestler all 3 years, placed 3rd in state his junior year, threw the javelin in track, and served in South Korea. He also played oboe in high school. Dad once said in a talk that it took him [Dad] 20 years to realize that playing oboe was not the most important thing in life. Alan leaned over to nearby family and whispered, "It won't take me that long." Carrie became a dancer, ballerina, beautiful, and kept life much more fun than it would have been otherwise.

Alan has a good javelin story to tell, but since you readers are not likely to hear him tell it, I'll tell it. At one track meet, the best javelin thrower in the state from another school was also throwing, and so a large crowd came to the ropes on both sides of the javelin lane to watch this state champion. Alan threw in his turn among the others, and wanted to do his very best, to not look too bad compared to this champ, so on one throw, Alan ran to the line and threw it as hard as he could. The only problem was the angle of release. It went nearly straight up. The crowds on both sides of the ropes looked up and each seemed to see it coming toward him / her. The crowds screamed and scattered.

After that story on Alan, I suppose it only fair that I also tell a funny on myself. It was a relay carnival in the BYU stadium. High schools from all over the state ran various kinds of relays. I was running the last half mile of a 2-mile (4 x 880) relay race. During the race, I began talking with a competitor acquaintance from Orem High who was to run the same last leg. While conversing, I lost track of the race, then looked at the track to see our 3rd runner nearing the hand-off zone. I thought 'Oh NO! I'm missing my hand-off' and ran onto the track in front of our 3rd runner, extended my arm back, he handed me the baton, I did 3 or 4 strides, then heard him say 'Stubbs, I still have a lap left'. I handed him back the baton, jumped off the track, and wished I could hide, as a chuckle waved through the stadium's spectators, but I had to hop on the track a lap later to run at the "right" time.

1976 April, we bought the Henry Black house, 172 S. 300 W. Henry Black built the house near 1915. We were excited to have our own house, our own yard, and our own dirt to grow things in. It cost $6,500, and we paid it off in 3 or 4 years. It was not much to look at, but it was strong—8 x 8's in the corners, etc—and it was ours. I have always loved the Black house. The wiring was scary thread-bare old, so Ron Kartchner helped me a half day, rewiring with me to show me how, so that I could finish the job over another few days. Ron is amazing: a mechanic, house-builder, a pleasant nice guy, a professional country western singer and composer, but gave that up to be more with his family. He moved here from Mesa with his large family, bought a lot, and built his house with money from the Mesa home sale. Church people came over to check on this family, perhaps living in destitute circumstances, but after Ron explained that his house was all paid for and had money left over while he looked for a job, the visitors said, "Heck, you're better off than I am."

As winter approached, we bought a wood stove, hauled wood, and enjoyed the cozy little house. Or at least that was my perspective. I hear that the old home's homely appearance was an embarrassment to some of our children. Understandable, but when the choices are a nice finished house for $30,000 (then) or a fixer upper for 6.500 to be paid off in 4 years, I avoid the 30-year debt route. I worked on improving it, as the poor kids bore with a frugal dad, whose concern for what others might think was as great as his concern for whether the IRS is getting enough money. Another plus were our good neighbors to the north, Steve and Janet Wilcox, more great people, like nearly everyone in Blanding.

Nearly everyone else uses chain saws for hauling wood from the mountains, I prefer handsaws for a few reasons: more exercise, less noise, less dangerous, and less maintenance. I like peace and quiet. I learned from Wib Laws that he had a couple of two-man handsaws, and asked if I could buy one. He hesitated, but did sell me one. So good and likable is Wib Laws and his children that I know: Lynn, whom I worked with, Mel, Kelly, Sandra, and cousins David Laws and Dwight Laws, all good people.

In 1976, two grandparents passed away, my Grampa Henry Stokes in March and my Grandma Ella Ritchie Stubbs in July.

During my 3 years working for Rehab, I realized that filling out government paperwork was not what I wanted to do the rest of my life. I am sure the services do some people some good, and Joel and Georgan were most pleasant to work with, but I was still intensely interested in languages and in determining some origins of Native American languages, whose origins were several. On my own I continued studying Hebrew, Egyptian, Nahuatl (Aztec), Quechua, and briefly looked at dozens of other languages. but the employment market for those languages was about as wide as a chipmunk on diet pills. After my main interest of languages, the sciences were still interests, physics most, but chemistry too. The sciences were more marketable, and chemistry probably more than physics. So in—

1977, in the spring, I left doing state paperwork, and we moved to BYU married housing. I got another night-watch job and took chemistry courses, toward a 2nd bachelors in chemistry.

Sheila was born in Provo, Utah, during finals week at the end of first summer term. I did the chemistry homework, but then went to the library to study Egyptian, Semitic and Native American languages. My thirst for knowledge in those areas was unquenchable. Should I go with my heart and financially limited language route? Or the more marketable science route, whose fire at the time was not as strong? We had a house paid for in Blanding, a good place to live while I thought about it some more.

Back in Blanding, I got a job with the Utah Navajo Development Council, as an Adult Education Teacher at White Mesa. I began amateur efforts to learn Ute. Bob McPherson was my supervisor—a smart, fun, hilarious, generous, and all-around great guy, whose wife Betsy was perhaps even nicer. I liked that job—taught people when they came, helped them prepare for the GED high school equivalency tests, and studied languages when no one came. The job had a little paper work, but not much.

During that time Jimmy Morris and Nelson Hart were the police officers at White Mesa. Those 2 and Norman Begay and his brother Larry invited me to play on their White Mesa community basketball team. I enjoyed associating with them. Nelson and Lauri Hart were part Mandan from the Dakotas and were also good likable people. That year with my Ute and Mandan friends is a favorite memory.

That year we were also called to serve in the White Mesa Branchopric with President Oris Black. Oris is as humble and good as they come. He grew up in the house we bought, his dad Henry Black having built it. It was a wonderful house, I thought. But it could get cold in the winter time, after the fire went out, but we later learned from Oris that he and his brothers slept on the front porch (outside) all winter every winter, shaking the snow off their blankets in the morning. Hard times are relative and our hard times have a hard time comparing to the hard times of those who really knew hard times.

1978 Sheila was one year old when she became sick one day. She had a fever, cried some, but mostly lay still and languid. Flu was the first suspect, but as the day progressed, she became more listless and inert. That afternoon we took her to the doctor. Dr. Redd looked at her, did some checking, and immediately suspected spinal meningitis. He did a spinal tap, but as Sheila did not even budge when he put the needle in her spine, he knew she was very sick, and may have started her on medication. I called Oris Black, our branch president, and we gave Sheila a priesthood blessing. Dr. Redd thought it best to life-fly Sheila to Salt Lake. Silvia found a ride to SLC to be with Sheila, while I stayed home tending our other two, Shana 6 and Joseph 4 at the time. The doctors at U of U medical center spoke highly of Dr. James Redd's quick and accurate diagnosis and quick action. They said another hour could have been too

late. Sheila improved, eventually got better, and they and we were relieved that there was no deafness, brain damage, or other consequences often caused by spinal meningitis. Another merciful blessing!

At the U of U medical center, Silvia and Sheila were next to a boy and his parents from Brazil. They only spoke Portuguese. The young boy was being treated for cancer. Because Silvia knew Spanish and could somewhat communicate with the parents, the physicians often called on her to translate. All being South Americans, they became friends, though the parents were grievously distraught over their son's condition and not-so-promising prospects. The father asked, "How can God do this to us and to an innocent child?" He was desperately looking for answers. Silvia acquired a Portuguese Book of Mormon. She told him a little of what it was about and pointed out the chapters on the Savior's visit, showing his love for the little children, that it might comfort him, to know that this life is not the end, but the opposite, the beginning of a great and eternal future for all who come unto Him Who has all power and all eternal rewards in His hand to give. He began to read, and read a lot. After a while he said to Silvia, "This is like poetry to my soul; it's beautiful." Their son passed away, but they were baptized and began working toward becoming an eternal family by the power of Him Who has all power, including power over death.

In the fall of 1978, Shana started first grade. Silvia sent her with a snack that she could eat in case she got hungry, like all good Argentine mothers do. Obedient to her mom, Shana went to school with her snack, but then got in trouble for bringing food to eat. How often we do our best and still get it wrong?

While living in the Henry Black house, Silvia got pneumonia. It was sudden and critical. I am no doctor, but had read of one with pneumonia feeling like his chest was being crushed and seconds later died. This night Silvia said she felt like her chest was being crushed. I considered going next door to get Steve Wilcox to help me administer, but it was middle of the night, people were asleep, and I doubted that there was even time to go to the hospital or next door. So I laid my hands on Silvia's head and blessed her by the power of the Melchizedek Priesthood and in the name of Christ, and she immediately felt better and slept comfortably the rest of the night. Of course, it is all God's power, yet even as an instrument of His priesthood, my percentages are so-so, so no one need think me a holy man or that healing powers consistently flow through this weak simple soul. Nevertheless, that night I felt His power go through me and into Silvia, and I could feel the healing when I said the words. Indeed, God lives and answers prayers (lesson 6 again) and His priesthood power is on the earth, restored by Peter, James, and John, regardless how simple the souls upon whom it has been bestowed. My line of priesthood authority is that Christ ordained Peter, James, and John, who ordained Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in 1829; Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris on Feb 14, 1835 ordained this dispensation's first 12 apostles, one being Brigham Young, who ordained Joseph F. Smith an apostle July 1, 1866, who ordained George Albert Smith an apostle on Oct 8, 1903, who ordained Delbert L. Stapley an apostle Oct 5, 1950, who ordained my father Darrel W. Stubbs a high priest and bishop Feb 17, 1962, who ordained me, Brian, an elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood 19 May 1968 and a high priest 15 July 1989.

Days were filled with a job until 5, then garden, yard, church, and family until all went to bed. So the only time to study was at night when everyone else slept. So I would study from 9 or 10 p.m. until 3 a.m. for a few nights in a row, until I got tired, then get a good night's sleep, then begin waking up at 3 a.m. to study from 3 to 7 every morning. I did that alternation some months. When I think back on how grueling was the schedule with which I tried to sate my love for languages, I sigh. I was finding interesting parallels between Hebrew and certain Amerindian language families, mostly Uto-Aztecan, and my interest in Native American languages and Near-Eastern languages was intense. I was always thinking and dreaming about having enough study time to learn them and do the research that I desired to do. After 8 years of being so intensely interested, I concluded that, as the fire within was not subsiding, it must have a purpose, and that I needed to get going that direction. The University of Utah offered an MA and PhD in Hebrew and in Arabic, and the in-state tuition was something I could handle without going in debt.

1979-1982: Graduate School Daze at University of Utah

After Christmas in December of 1978, we moved from Blanding to University of Utah married student housing to begin winter quarter in January 1979, at age 29. Arvid Black was kind and volunteered his carpet truck, about the size of a U-Haul, which enabled the move in one trip instead of several. Such a good man Arvid is! Yes, most of Blanding are that way, amazingly wonderful people!

Shana was 6, Joseph 4, Sheila 1, and with five mouths to feed I needed a job. I was blessed to find one my first day looking. I wanted a night-watch job so that I could study during some working hours; otherwise, there are hardly enough hours in a week to support a family and do graduate level studying. I got a job with Pinkerton, the security service, being night-watchman at the Utah Power and Light building. To work for Pinkerton, however, one needed a private detective license. I studied the material, and went and took the test. They told me to come back after so many days to learn the results and get my license, if I passed. The days passed, and Silvia and the kids wanted to come with me to pick up my private detective license. After all, not many people get to ride in a car with a private detective. As we approached the area, I zigzagged about through many streets and knew about where it was, but I could not find the building where I was supposed to pick up my private detective license.

"What was the name of the building?" Silvia asked.

"I don't remember," said the private detective not so bright that day. In the movies private detectives remember 5-line addresses, dozens of phone numbers heard only once. Photographic memories record license plate numbers speeding away. They know the cities like the backs of their hands and can find anyone, anytime, anywhere by brilliant deduction from the smallest clues, and here I was unable to find the building to pick up my private detective license after having been there last week.

We eventually found it, and I worked at Utah Power and Light, 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. each week night. I tried to sleep from 5 to 10 p.m., before going to work, but I had never been able to sleep during the day very well (before age 50, no prob after 50), so after some months, I was a borderline basket case. Some nights I would get so tired that I had to walk around to stay awake. From the 8th floor I would look out the windows and watch the rest of the world sleep, thinking of them all snuggled in their soft warm beds, and I would long for the day when I would be able to sleep at night again.

August 1979 Silvia received word that her grandfather had died—very sad. September 1979, ¾ of a year into grad school, I had to return to Blanding to fix a plumbing problem under the Black house for the renters. I called both Blanding plumbers, but either no answer or too busy, so I drove our VW bug down to Blanding, and spent a day crawling in the crawl space under the Henry Black house, repairing a broken sewer line. Belly crawling in dusty air, using a stick to twist up cob webs as I crawled, and trying to keep the black-widow spiders calm and not scurrying all over me, in order to dig and fix a leaking sewer line—not a fun job. The stress of fitting a 12-hour round-trip drive and several hours work into an already grueling schedule, while behind on sleep, was also very discouraging. As we were poverty-stricken students, I also filled the back seat and the passenger seat with food from our food storage to take back to SLC, mostly boxes of glass jars filled with bottled fruit. I made it back to my parent's house in Provo, where I stayed after arriving exhausted late Saturday night. Sunday morning I awoke to find our VW overturned on its side. During the night some kids driving by evidently thought it a cute trick to play on a VW owner. A policeman and I were able to lift, push, and upright the car, but scores of glass jars were broken and a year's worth of food storage spilled all over the interior. I looked at that and felt like crying, and did cry later when alone while driving. After a summer of putting up the fruit, and after a long hard day of retrieving it and fixing sewer, and after a long hard week of all night-watch jobs, and then losing it all, I felt really bad that day. After cleaning the mess as best I could and checking engine fluid levels, I did a few turns of the ignition, and it progressed from coughing and sputtering to eventually running smoothly. I drove home with the few jars that survived the crash of whoever's overturn.

In contrast to challenges, I thoroughly enjoyed the Hebrew and Arabic classes. Having time to study one's real interests was like living a dream. An advisor suggested that I also take a linguistics

course or two. So I took introduction to linguistics from David Iannucci. I loved it, and realized that in order to do the research, I needed to become a linguist. So in the fall of 1979, shortly after Silvia's Grampa Canelo's passing, I began an M.A. in linguistics, while continuing classes toward a PhD in Semitic languages (Hebrew, Arabic, and Aramaic). I thoroughly enjoyed the years with the linguistics professors: Ray Freeze, Mauricio Mixco, Wick Miller, and David Iannucci. They knew their stuff, were good to me, and provided me as good a foundation in comparative Uto-Aztecan (UA) as could be obtained anywhere on the planet, because Wick was essentially "the father" of UA at the time, and Ray knew comparative UA about as well as he did, and the other two had also researched and published in UA, so the U of U was something of a Mecca for UA linguistics at the time.

The summer of 1980, both Silvia and Shana were inspired similarly. A bus would pick up kids from the University Village and take them to a public pool for swimming in the summer. Shana (now 8) and Joseph (6) went a few times. However, one day Silvia felt very uneasy about their going that day. She knew they would be disappointed if they could not go, yet she had no obvious explanation for why not. They got ready and she let them out the door. As they walked toward the bus, Silvia prayed that if there was reason for them not to go, that something stop them. She watched from the window as they walked toward the bus. As they came to the bus stop, Silvia noticed that they were the only two that day, though usually a group of kids showed up to take the bus. Silvia also noticed that there were no other kids on the bus either, in contrast to the usual other heads bobbing about. As the bus door opened and Joseph stepped onto the bus, Shana suddenly grabbed Joseph from the back and pulled him off the bus, and pulled him home to his bewilderment and brief protest. Silvia was relieved. She had said nothing to either of them beforehand, yet Shana acted consistent with Silvia's feelings. Years later Shana said that never had she been more strongly and clearly directed what to do. Recently baptized, Shana knew of the Holy Ghost, but that day she experienced it clearly, letting her know exactly what to do. So grateful are we to Protective Providence and that they were likely spared something awful that day.

At about age 5 or 6, Joseph was losing his baby teeth on a regular basis. After a few quarters under the pillow, I suggested to my wife that maybe we should simply tell him the truth—still give him the quarters, but not under the guise of a Tooth Fairy. I had my doubts about this Tooth Fairy business being honest. So I sat Joseph down and explained to him: "Actually, Joseph, Daddy is the Tooth Fairy."

His eyes grew wide with excitement. Then he jumped up and ran to the front door, saying, "O boy! I'm going to go tell my friends: **MY DAD** is the Tooth Fairy." He stopped just a moment to ask, "Where do you keep all the teeth? Is that why we never have any money, because it costs lots of quarters to be the Tooth Fairy?" I opened my mouth, hoping to form an answer by the time I exhaled, but he was gone and out the door—too quick for mind or mouth. They were evidently only rhetorical questions. Details could be filled in later; they were not **that** important compared to the sensational news that he wanted to spread through the neighborhood. I looked at Silvia and shrugged my shoulders, "I tried." Silvia says that he later asked if he could take me to "Show and Tell."

After months of five 8-hour shifts, I found another night watch job at Buehner Concrete, which was three 12-hour shifts instead. I found it to be much easier on my system, because even though I only slept every other night, I could sleep all I wanted, usually 9 or 10 hours, the nights in between. I also had a paper route to supplement our income. I would arise at 6 a.m., deliver papers, go to school and study all day, return at 5 pm, eat dinner with the family, work from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., come home and deliver the papers again, go to school all day, then come home, eat, and crash after 36 hours to sleep 9 or 10 hours every other night. The good thing about 36-hour days is that they make 18-hour days seem like a half day.

Silvia would wake Shana and Joseph at 6 a.m. and the 3 of them would fold the newspapers for me, so that I could hit the trail at 6:20 as soon as I came home. When I think back on how much Silvia did to try to make life easier for me, and the sacrifices she bore to enable my education, my heart is much moved in gratitude for her. She drove the kids all over SLC, not an easy thing for one not accustomed to driving in big city traffic and who did not learn to drive until mid-20s. Our old car could barely make it up the last long hill. More than once she did not have sufficient momentum and had to manage backing down

in traffic to try again. O my! She did the shopping with the tribe in tow. And when I think of little Shana and Joseph, 8 and 6, getting up early to fold newspapers, my heart melts again.

The Buehner plant covered several acres (torn down now), and it was the night watchman's duty to check various points each hour. One check station was in a large old wooden building that creaked even when the wind was not blowing. A little breeze had it slow dancing with more ruckus than a noisy spook alley. A few cats were kept to keep the mice down. In the dark one hoped not to step on a tail, as that hardly added to the security guard's sense of security while walking spooky buildings in the black of night. The preceding guard told me about the large rat that roamed the place and where he hung out. He was as large as the cats, so the cats did not bother him. I never saw the rat, only felt it brush against my leg once when walking a narrow aisle near the place where it hung out. And yep, it felt about the size and weight of a cat.

One night a police car came to the gate and the two officers informed me that an armed robbery had just occurred at a store below the compound. They said the robber was last seen running toward the Buehner plant and they asked if they could come in and look around.

"By all means," I said, opening the gate faster than ever and almost saying, "and don't leave until you find him." The compound would be a perfect place to hide. The many acres included a number of old buildings—large ones, small ones, with lots of corners, cubby holes, bins, large equipment, stacks of odd-shaped concrete, dozens of unlockable doors, and all pitch black until daylight. They returned 15 minutes later, reporting that they did not find him. Watching them drive away was very disheartening. I had to walk through that whole plant every hour the rest of the night. I was all alone … except for perhaps an armed robber. We had the whole place to ourselves! I had no trouble staying awake that night. Finally, the glorious dawn slowly filled the sky—more welcome to me than to anyone else in the valley.

One evening, Joseph, age 6, and 2 of his friends were playing football. I had a few minutes before I had to leave for the all-night shift at Buehner, so I asked if they would like to play a short game of football, the 3 against me. They shouted with excitement, and I kicked off. I could have easily stopped them each time, but I lifted my knees rapidly, nearly running in place without making much progress sometimes, stumbling and falling other times, so that they could score about every 3rd play. Likewise, on offense I scored at will two times, but "accidentally" fell down when I had a clear shot at the end zone other times. I arranged it so that they could feel good about holding me to a 12-12 tie, and then I had to leave for work.

After working all night, I returned home and sat to eat breakfast with the family the next morning. While eating, Silvia asked Joseph how the game went last night.

He said, "We won."

Being curious how he arrived at that conclusion, I asked, "I thought it was a tie?"

He answered, "Well, we made two more touchdowns after you left."

Sometimes I could study all night; other times I could do so most of the night, but would have to pace or walk to stay awake the last hours. Other nights I would be tired enough that I did not get much studying done at all, but spent most of the night walking and fighting to stay awake.

One night I went to work so very tired. I knew there was no way I could stay awake even half the night, that I would be fighting sleep the whole 12-hour shift. Silvia was good to call at various points in the night, when she woke up, to see how I was doing and help me stay awake. This night, I was dead from the start, so tired. By 7 p.m. I was pacing, unable to study and unable to stay awake without walking. Then suddenly at 9:30, I was wide awake and alert. I studied all night without ever getting sleepy. I figured Silvia must have prayed for me; otherwise, such a miraculous alertness until 6 a.m. would have been impossible given how I felt 12 hours earlier. When I got home and told Silvia, she said, "Yes, I prayed for you." She was also the most tired she had felt in a long time, and was expecting Jessica. She could not stay awake either in order to call me. She prayed one of her sincere prayers, about 9:30, explaining to Heavenly Father that she could not stay awake that night and she knew I was tired too. So

she asked Him to help me stay awake so that she could go to sleep and not worry about me, as falling asleep on the job could end it. Indeed, God hears and answers prayers (lesson 6 again).

Having examined out of 1st semester German in 1974, I skipped 2nd semester also and took 2nd year German at U of U as part of my graduate studies. The Germanic language family interests me, wishing I might find time to study Old English, Old Norse, Gothic, and Swedish, as well as German, to get a picture of Proto-Germanic, my ancestors' lingo, but only so many free hours in a lifetime.

Whenever a **loaded gun** is pointed at one, count it providential that it did not fire, even accidently! In U of U village housing, we came home in the middle of the night from a trip. I carried the sleeping kids upstairs to their beds, got in bed myself as Silvia put away a few things, and suddenly a loud banging on the door came with a voice yelling, "Open up!" Silvia was frantic and about to open, but I told her not to open the door. Hearing me tell Silvia 'don't open it' seemed to rile them more. He said, "This is the police. Come out with your hands up!" At least now we had some reason to think it might be the police.

"What do you want?" I asked.

"Open up, or we'll bust the door in!" The voice seemed determined, nervous, mad, and would give me no explanation of the reason for all this. I doubted that a robber would make such a ruckus in student housing, so I began thinking it more probable that it was the police, but wondered what on earth brought on this attitude? Were we behind on rent? Was this the new collections policy? "Come out with your hands up and don't try anything. We have guns pointed at the door." We had done nothing wrong, so I was hoping the matter was resolvable, but if they had guns and were coming in regardless, I preferred that the shooting be outside than inside where the children were. So I opened the door, and put my hands out, shaking them a little. In retrospect, Silvia said it looked like I was playing "put your both hands out and shake'em all about." But if guns were aimed at the door, I'd rather that only my hands get blown away than all of me. When I opened the door, I could see a lady police officer as well as the nervous fellow pointing a shotgun at me. He would not believe that I was me and asked for ID. It is hard to reach for ID with hands up, but the lady officer seemed to sense immediately that I was the harmless rightful resident, which was eventually clarified. It turns out that Silvia had told her friend downstairs when we would return, but we returned the night before. So the friend called the police. The police arrived and likewise assumed the noises inside were robbers. Was he a new policeman? He seemed awfully nervous, and having a nervous person's hands on the trigger of a shotgun pointing at me was a tad tense for me too.

1981 I began attending the temple regularly, not because I was such a good guy, but to help me stumble that direction. The rigors of school, family, and tiring night jobs had me humbly hoping for what Divine assistance He might grant. Sometime early 1981, as I was walking by the Church Office Building from the Temple to my car, the Spirit whispered in my mind the exact words: "You can work in that building if you want." Not sure what kinds of jobs they had, but decided to inquire. I told someone at some desk that I was studying linguistics, Hebrew, and other languages. I was directed to the Translation Dept, the main place where language things happen. They were starting a huge exegesis project to help translators of the scriptures and could use some part-time help from persons knowledgeable in languages, and I was hired. I enjoyed working there the 1 ½ years that I did. Roger Miller was my immediate supervisor, a good man, a fantastic pianist, and sang in the Tabernacle Choir. Egyptologist Ed Ashment worked there also, later to defect from truth.

Jessica was born on a beautiful calm spring day in March, during finals week of winter quarter at U of U (U of U was on the quarter system then). I remember watching from a distance as they pulled Jessica out. They set her on a wheeled baby bed and took her away for the whatevers. I remember following them, watching through windows, and keeping close track of exactly which one was our baby through their various procedures until they had the identifying band on her wrist and until I could check that band and see that it did say Stubbs baby. Then I went back to Silvia to see how she was doing.

After 2 years, I finished the M.A. in Linguistics, tacked on an ESL certificate, and continued doing coursework toward the PhD in Hebrew, Arabic, and Aramaic. In three different departments the faculty

voted me the top student. I was selected the best Hebrew student one year, best Arabic student the next year, received the linguistic dept tutor and assistantship position 2 years with tuition and hourly wages, taught ESL classes for the English/ESL dept, taught 2nd year Arabic one summer for the Near East Dept. That fall, I was also given a scholarship to teach another ESL class. The night-watch jobs were finally over! The luxury of a good night's sleep most nights was wonderful!

One summer I was also hired to teach English to a group of Saudi Arabian government employees. The Saudi government contracted with U of U for an English-learning program. I enjoyed it. Most Arabs are good people—magnanimous—though some could argue heatedly with each other at the drop of a hat, and stop on a dime when break was over. I was also granted a scholarship by the Near East Dept.

By spring 1982, I had finished my coursework for the PhD and had passed the comprehensive exams. I was set to begin work on a dissertation with 3 scholarships lined up for that fall of 1982: a 2nd year scholarship from the Linguistics Dept, one from the ESL Dept, and one from the Near East Dept. Economically, I was finally set for a normal life load, after going day and night for so many years.

About 2 weeks after receiving the 3rd scholarship, the Spirit whispered to me: "Prepare to return to Blanding." What? How could that be? I had 3 scholarships and would finally have all expenses paid by 3 scholarships, free to work on a dissertation. Even when I finish the dissertation, a PhD in Semitic languages and linguistics goes to teach at a university, not to a small town. But a few days later, it came again: Prepare to return to Blanding. Silvia later told me she felt the same thing. I was quite miffed at the seeming contradiction. Why should I leave 3 scholarships? It did not make sense.

A day or two after that, I was called in by the ESL Dept, and they explained that since I had 3 scholarships, they thought it better to give someone else the ESL tutor scholarship. I was okay with that. I still had two scholarships. A day or two after that, the Near-East Department informed me that my scholarship had been given to someone else—the girlfriend of a faculty member, I later learned. That decision was corrupt. The professor whose girlfriend got it avoided me like the plague and looked very guilty whenever our paths crossed. With scholarships evaporating daily and all coursework completed, I could work on a dissertation from wherever, and as we had a house all paid for in Blanding, we could live there much more inexpensively than paying $400 rent each month in university housing. The Church Translation Department let me finish up some projects from a distance as well, and I received some pay for those. So with encouragement from circumstances unforeseen by mortals, but known only to Him Who Knows all things, we obeyed and prepared to return to Blanding. God lives and takes care of us, if we are trying to abide in Him, sometimes obeying due to a good push.

Back to Blanding (August 1982)

We packed the International pickup bed in which I made a cubby hole for Shana to lie on a couch, with walls and roof made of other goods. The clubhouse looked so fun that I was wishing I could ride in back. We pulled up to our house, walked in to inspect the place, then turned around to walk back to the vehicle to start unloading, and Steve Wilcox and his boys, each carrying a box, asked where we wanted them. What great neighbors are the Wilcox family!

We arrived in Blanding without a job, but with a house to live in, all paid for, and no other debt. Kay Shumway, one of the nicest guys in the world and Dean at the local College of Eastern Utah, Blanding, said they needed an adjunct ESL instructor, teaching English as a Second Language, so I did that at CEU's very low adjunct rates for a year and a half, but it was enough to pay the utility bill and buy food for the family, but not enough to fix the now kaput pickup that I normally hauled wood in. So the first part of that first winter, I carried the wood on my shoulder.

I do not like borrowing things, though I knew many would lend their pickups if they knew. Nevertheless, after dark, I would take the axe and walk from my house into the woods west of West Water, trim an already blown down cedar tree trunk to what I could carry, about 80 to 100 pounds, and carry the log and the axe back home in the dark of night, alternating shoulders or in both arms, with rest

stops as needed. Once home, I would chop it into firewood that would last 2 or 3 days. Then I would go out again when that was gone and do the same thing. Wilcoxes, Pincocks, Carrolls, or Kartchners were all willing and later lent me their pickups other times, after Silvia's directives helped me overcome my hesitance to ask. Perhaps it was that winter that Ron Kartchner put a good strong used transmission in my International pickup so that the rest of the winter I hauled wood in my pickup. Ron Kartchner is as good as they come and as good a friend as a guy could have, like many people in Blanding.

It was also that fall of 1982 when we met Kline and Dianne Carroll, who would be fast friends for life. Kline was the Stake Mission President and I was a Seventy, so we were companions now and then. Kline had also served a mission in Argentina, the same area where Silvia lived with the Bisseggers. They did not know each other then, but figure they both may have attended some of the same meetings. Our children also aligned well, same age ranges from oldest to youngest, though their 10 had more in that range than our 5. One does not have to work long with Kline to know that he is the most humble, easy-going, likable guy. He and his wife and children are a beautiful family.

Having heard of my research in Uto-Aztecan, BYU FARMS (Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies) gave me a small stipend to put together what I was seeing of Hebrew in the Uto-Aztecan language family. So I worked hard on that the last months of 1982.

1983 in January I finished the monograph on Semitic in Uto-Aztecan. The BYU scholars found it interesting and promising, but none were Uto-Aztecan specialists. I heard no negatives, but no one was up to saying 'yes, you've got it' either, so I began to doubt whether all such work was worth the effort. If BYU's linguists and Semitists could not be more positive, who else would be? So I did no research the next 4 ½ years, feeling done for life with that hobby. I could not get excited about a dissertation either, and after the underhanded corruption at me from the Near-East Dept, my original disenchantment with academia came back firmly reestablished and had me wanting nothing to do with academia's stratospheric pretensions. Besides, I had plenty to fix around the house, classes to teach, papers to grade, yard to keep, requests for musical numbers, etcetera, so I dropped the research, but still studied languages at times.

As an adjunct instructor at the college, I did not make much, though my hours were more than a full load most quarters. So in my poverty of a full load at part-time wages, Silvia began a daycare that did well enough. I built sand boxes, swing sets, and club houses in the sky (4 feet off the ground), and helped watch the kids when they played outside. Many children, now adults, remember Mrs. Stubbs' kind care at her daycare. Merlin Grover was the DFS inspector of daycare facilities, a very good and kind man.

That summer 1983, at age 34, I ran my first marathon, an outrageous distance! Races of 3, 6, 10, and 13 miles are fine, but 26 is overkill. It takes a half day to train some days. But being a runner, I ought to do at least one. I actually did the distance twice—ran 26 miles 2 weeks before the race. Not supposed to do that, but I wanted to make sure I could do it without stopping. Immediately after the 26 miles I took my pulse—only 100. Though I had been running all my life, one must prepare for a marathon. I ran 15 miles on Mondays, 12 on Wednesdays, 20 on Saturdays, and shorter 6-mile runs the days between, with tapering the last week. It worked well. I did it in 3 hours and 15 minutes—7:26 per mile. I did 7-minute miles the first 20 miles, a 3-hour pace, but the last miles my legs cramped and I was forced to walk some.

Sometime in the early 80s, I felt wronged by a group of church members, more my perception than their doing. Nevertheless, it hurt deeply enough that I thought about an ecclesiastical vacation. I knew I would not stay away, but maybe a year or so. After my family walked into church, I stayed out in the car not feeling like going in, thinking hard, deciding. Then I thought of what I had told that inactive family in the mission field: One should not let a person keep one away from the Lord; don't let who is at church keep you from going to His Church. That made my decision. If it was good advice for that family, it was good advice for me, and I needed to do the good advice I had dished out years earlier. I got out of the car, walked into Church, and never considered going inactive again, no matter how unfair a member or two here and there might be. Only in brief fleeting moments has it seemed like a restful idea on

occasion, but not worth encouraging errant behavior in hundreds of future posterity. I actually love belonging to the Lord's Church and being among His good people. Being otherwise is a horrible thought.

Sheila and the Rooster

In 1983 we got 10 chickens and a rooster. I built a hen house for their nightly sleep, and during the day the chickens did a wonderful job of keeping the weeds and bugs down around the yard because they liked to eat both. I remember the small joy I had in providing them with land for enjoying life and a shelter for keeping them protected at night. Though the chickens hardly experienced gratitude for these provisions that they surely took for granted, it gave me joy to see them enjoy. I thought likewise how little we appreciate all that our Heavenly Provider provides us, in the way of this earth, and life, food, and all else. Yes, we more often should stop and think and rejoice in having life, food to eat, land to grow it on, forests to walk through, and mountains to hike, and thank Him for all that He provides for us, and be better than dunces at appreciation. Anyway, back to Sheila and the rooster—

The chickens were a likable lot, except the big rooster. Old feisty feathers would jump up at people, scaring them mainly, though his claws could hurt children not big enough to run or fight. His size and vicious temperament had gained him a healthy respect even among the older neighborhood kids.

I often let the chickens wander the yard to eat bugs and weeds. One evening I was working in the yard (it does happen) when it came time to put the chickens in their pen. As I worked, I asked 6-year-old Sheila to herd them back into the coop. She asked, "What if the rooster comes at me?"

Handing her a nearby 3-foot length of one-by-two, I told her, "If he comes at you, hit him as hard as you can with this stick." (That was back in the days when children were more important than animals.) I resumed working, nearly forgetting the assignment given her, when suddenly screams filled the air. Knowing immediately the cause, I dashed toward the ruckus. As I rounded the corner of the house, the scene that met my eyes was a relief to the screams that met my ears.

Sure enough, the rooster had turned on Sheila. But true to instructions, Sheila was clobbering that old rooster over the head every time he tried to jump up at her. He was so dizzy that he did not know which way was up. But judging by the screams, he thought he was staging a major victory, and kept trying, flopping about, void of all sense of direction. He had little sense to start with: to think he was winning while being hammered only proved it. He would shake his head after every thump, try to focus on the presumed victim, and then jump up again only to meet the next blow in the attempt.

After my boot encouraged the rooster to stand aside about 20 feet, I gathered the little one in my arms, reflecting on the irony of the situation. The rooster, who seemed to view himself as triumphant, could hardly walk straight. He strutted proudly—if a bit wobbly—as if gloating in an imagined supremacy inconsistent with his bleeding crest. Sheila, on the other hand, thought she had breathed her last and was crying with a blood-stained weapon in hand as evidence of a very lopsided victory.

Like Sheila and the rooster, our perspectives of how we are doing in life can be different than what really is. Some hoot and holler and think they are on top of the world as the trap doors of life open beneath them, still exchanging high fives on their way down. Others fear the worst amidst the best that life has to offer, or have no idea how well they are doing because they are doing things right, though tough at times.

To save on groceries, we also had goats awhile, for milk and meat. The goats were fun to watch, growing up from little ones romping about to less-energy adults (like our species too). Our first years in Blanding, Steve Lovell taught me how to milk a cow and I milked theirs when he was out of town. A lot of good milk twice a day, more than our family drank, so a goat was about right and ate less. I liked goat milk as much as cow milk, though not crazy about either. I like milk on cereal or as chocolate milk or ice cream. Taste is more dependent on what the animal eats than whether goat or cow. My parents visited and as we ate dinner, my mom said that she could never drink goat milk. I then explained that she had just drunk two glasses of it during dinner. One family reunion we had a goat rodeo, letting the smaller children ride the adult goats. After a couple of years, we simplified life to be without goats and bought milk at the store.



1983 or 1984: Silvia, Sheila, brian, Jessica, Shana, Joseph

Steve Lovell was an energetic guy who ran through each day more than walked. He was a favorite 5th-grade teacher and a hard worker. As a teen on the farm, he would sometimes have to irrigate at night after working all day. He would lie down in a row with his arm stretched toward where the water would come, so that when his hand got wet, it would wake him, then he'd hop up to change the water to the next set of rows and lie down again, getting a few minutes sleep between water changes. A generous and happy hard worker. Another among hundreds of good people in this small town.

A Performance Not to Be Forgotten—Unfortunately

1984 was the year of one of the more memorable musical events of all time. Our family was asked to provide two musical numbers for a special Sunday evening Relief Society meeting for all the women in the community. This was a special once-a-year event, no small, run-of-the-mill meeting, but a polished tradition in the community. We decided on two numbers that 12-year-old Shana could play on the violin, and I would accompany her on the piano. I forwarded such, but the committee called back, explaining that they had heard that our family does delightful musical numbers, and that they were hoping that one might be a family number. I am not sure where such rumors came from, perhaps from the fact that we did sing Rocky Top Tennessee as halftime entertainment at a SJHS basketball game once, but that is a far cry from the refinement expected at the annual women's extravaganza, but I agreed to see what we could do.

For the family number, we selected a hymn, *How Gentle God's Commands*, and I arranged a violin part for Shana and a cello part for me. Silvia would play the piano (was taking lessons and could play that song), and the 3 younger children—Joseph age 10, Sheila 7, and Jessica 3—would sing. We rehearsed it several times and it went well.

The day came—as it always does. The ladies, dressed in their Sunday best, filled the stake center. A speaker had been imported from SLC 300 miles away. A feminine loveliness permeated the atmosphere. My son and I, the only males present, tried hard not to detract from the beautiful aura of refined femininity filling the chapel. The meeting began with the usual pleasantries and preliminaries. Shana and I did the first number, which went well. Then the main speaker delivered a wonderful 40-minute talk that had many in tears and others merely uplifted. But we could fix that. It was time for the closing song. That was us.

Silvia took her place at the piano. I took up my cello and sat behind the three children that were facing the audience. Shana stood at my right with her violin. We were all set. Silvia started to play the 4-measure introduction. She played 2 notes, then stopped. She started again, played 3 notes, then stopped. She had done fine in rehearsals. I was hoping the 3rd time to be a charm, but after a 3rd false start, I thought she might relax if we skipped the introduction and simply started playing all together. After signaling such to her, we at least started together.

Things went tolerably well for 5 or 6 measures, though the piano part sounded a bit strange. Silvia later confided that she had the wrong page and did not realize it until after we had started playing. That is why she kept stopping on the introduction. She sensed something was different, but was too nervous to

grasp what it was. Sometime during the song, she realized she was on the wrong page, but she did not dare take the time to find the right page, fearing the interruption would take too long, nor did she want the audience to see the pianist searching for a new song in the middle of the number. So she played what she could remember of the piece that the rest of us were playing. That is what was happening at the piano.

In the choir, another drama began to unfold. As I was saying, things went tolerably well for 5 or 6 measures—outside of the fact that the pianist was playing a different piece. At some point early in the number—and I mean, very early—Joseph and Sheila got the giggles. Now they were the only two carrying the tune. Jessica, only 3 years old, was more or less a fixture so that this could pass as a "family number." We 3 instrumentalists continued playing under the assumption that they would eventually get over their giggles and resume singing. Well, you know what they say about assumptions. After they had giggled through a few measures without singing a word or a note, it became obvious that they were not going to get over this without a little help. So I skipped a note to quickly poke each of them in the back with my cello bow and then I resumed playing, again assuming that they would get the point, straighten up, and start singing. Instead of taking the hint as I expected, they both turned around and stared at me as if to ask what I wanted. What did they think I wanted? I wanted them to stop giggling and sing, but I did not want to have to say it out loud and let spoken prose ruin the glorious music in progress. With those two staring at me, I lost my place. You see, I did not have any music in front of me, because I had my part memorized ... at least I did until they turned around and stared at me.

Their turning around to find out what I wanted not only made me forget my part, but it also gave Shana the giggles—the only performer emitting music as planned and still intact. With the last thread of continuity beginning to crumble, it was difficult to figure out where we were. The sounds around me gave me no clue. The singers never did quit giggling. I finally remembered my part, but I could not tell where anyone else was. At that point, I doubted that any two of us were together, which supposition was later verified by the fact that we all finished our parts at different times. In the middle of it, I considered stopping the whole mess and starting over, but I decided against it. Its being any better a second time seemed very improbable, and no sense in making fools of ourselves twice when we only had to do it once. So we all remained in place until the last person stopped making noises, at which time we vacated the stand with what dignity might be … come to think of it, none was salvageable whatsoever.

During the closing prayer, I considered not opening my eyes until all the people had left. I pitied those in positions traditionally expected to say something nice about the musical disaster. One person started, "Well …" but could not think of a way to finish the sentence. At first, I felt put out with the designated carriers of the melody that was not, but none of the other parts happened as planned either. In the restroom (a good hiding place while the building cleared), I pictured it from the audience's point of view and could not stop laughing for several minutes. I finally regained a measure of austere composure … enough to appear not happy, in case anyone cared.

If we had done just right, it would not have been memorable. However, in contrast to that, another performance went quite well and with no prior notice or preparation and not on an instrument that I even played really. Once in a Stake Priesthood Meeting, Stake President Preston Nielson started the meeting, then realized he had no pianist. He looked at me in the audience and motioned to me to come on the stand and accompany the opening hymn. He knew I was a musician and so he must have assumed that I was also a pianist. I walked up on the stand and to the piano, heard him announce the opening song, which I had never played before, and without book, played it by ear (melody and chords) with only a mistake or two. I noticed a person or two in the audience, who knew that I was not a pianist and smiled at me with empathetic interest as to how this might turn out. I smiled back, also wondering how it might turn out. They were as surprised as I was that it went fairly well. I often played hymns by ear in ward priesthood meetings over the years as male pianists were rare in Blanding wards, back when they did opening exercises. I could play perhaps a third of the hymns by ear, the more familiar ones that are not too complex harmonically.

In April 1984, a full-time position opened up at CEU-San Juan Campus. So at age 35, a tad tardy in timeframe, I began an enjoyable career. Teaching English as a Second Language is a branch of linguistics, mainly because traditional English teachers do not have sufficient linguistic understanding of the intricacies involved in second language learning. (See "The Subconscious Mind's Role in Language Acquisition" in *Morsels for the Mind*.) In a curriculum committee meeting with Price faculty, I once said: "English teachers know literature, but linguists know English." Years later, the Vice President said he remembered that. I also taught linguistics classes for USU's bilingual program for teachers. Buckley Jensen, a prominent high school English teacher in the county for decades and a good writer of a weekly column, said of my class that he learned more about English in my linguistics class than in all his previous education.

Nevertheless, beyond ESL and linguistics, I became a regular English teacher, teaching freshman composition (101) and research writing (201) mostly. As English was my least favorite subject in high school, I was a mite amused to have become an English teacher. Yet I realized that English is a good position to teach all about life, as well as English. A Hebrew professor only teaches Hebrew; a math teacher only math; but to improve reading and writing, one must read and write, and who chooses what the students read? The teacher! That's me. And why read boring stuff? I would bring in interesting readings beneficial to their future lives. I came to enjoy teaching, and bringing them life-relevant information, and seeing faces light up upon learning or realizing things that they had not known before. Not every day was wonderful, but enough were, when seeing a few faces comprehending the information's value to the world, if the world only knew. Other days faces would exit as expressionless as they entered. We do what we can: win a few, lose a few, and earn a few. Sometimes I wondered if a lone linguist belonged in an English department, but the other English teachers—Merry Palmer, Bob McPherson, Jim Sayers, Terri Winder, Diane McNeave, Josi Brewer, Genevieve Larson, Kimberly Hiatt (in their turns over the years, only 2 or 3 at a time)—were all kind and appreciated the value of a linguist to the English collection. My lack of interest in literature made them happy that one less person was in the literature-class rotation.

In any case, I soon realized that my Heavenly Father had blessed me with the best situation imaginable. Blanding has beautiful mountains nearby, I walk 3 blocks to work instead of commuting an hour on freeways to a big city university, I love small towns, and the high percentage of good people in small towns, especially in Blanding, whose ancestors had been through the refiner's fire, making these folks finer people than in all the other dozen places I had lived. And I enjoy working with the nearby Utes and Navajos. I also had about as much time for research as university professors. A wonderful situation!

Most become attached to what they grow up with: for example, my wife, from Buenos Aires (larger than LA), likes big cities. I grew up in Honolulu and Los Angeles, but dislike big cities. Like bumper cars, juiced from without, big-city lovers sometimes seem dependent on the raucous juices that power the mad rushing about, as if crowds, traffic, and clatter enable those needing the vibration of motion and commotion to move.

My family sometimes seems subject to a similar mode of existence with the TV set. The TV seems to be on all waking hours. Sound to live by, it seems. I can pass through the living room, notice that no one is watching the TV, turn it off, and then watch a phenomenon permeate all life forms in the environment. Existing momentum allows all to continue as they were for a while, but like deer alerted to a change of scent in the forest, they eventually perk up. Something is wrong. They cannot immediately put their finger on it, but some life-threatening state has just been put into effect. All life forms in the house slow down and nearly come to a stop until someone realizes that THE TV IS OFF. Then with the discovery, the culprit (me) is arraigned and prosecuted like all other disturbers of the environment who build reservoirs or try to save on the electric bill.

Some summer in the 1980s, we were driving from Provo to Blanding when a summer thunder storm put the power out on the whole east side of the state. We reached Price, but no power; so no gas stations could pump gas. At Green River the lines at gas stations were longer. Moab was the limit of our tank. So we got in a line and enjoyed the camaraderie of fellow stranded strangers. When a crisis develops—and this was only minor compared to many—some people get angry and ornery while others

get helpful and magnanimous. By midnight people were camping on the asphalt by their vehicles, parents trying to make children comfortable, some sharing food and water with strangers. Sometime in the wee hours the power came on, gas was pumped, and all were on the road again. Though minor, this small crisis was a good reminder of how helplessly dependent we are on so many systems—electricity, phones, water, vehicles, gas—and how the whole system is wonderful, but also complex enough that when one necessary link goes kaput, the whole system lies helpless. Food for thought! (See "The Fox of Westwater and the Rest of Us" in *Morsels for the Mind*.)

1985 was the year that Silvia and I did 100 endowment sessions between us. She did 28 and I did 72. Having been a stake missionary for years without much success along those lines, I thought at least I can do the dead some good with a degree of dependable regularity that seemed so elusive when trying to help the living see the light. The Provo or Manti temples were the choices—540 miles round trip to either. Once or twice or thrice a month, I or we would drive up, do 2 or 3 sessions in a row, then drive back.

In January I once took the bus from Monticello to Provo and back so that I could sleep instead of drive (no such route now). All worked well until one night the bus dropped me off in Monticello at 2 a.m. and the white van that I had left parked behind the county building would not start. A county patrolman tried a push-start with his car, broke his front grill-like protection, was not a happy camper, and drove away. Being only 21 miles from Blanding, I knew I could jog home by daylight no problem, and I did not need to be to work until 8 a.m. So I started jogging in my Sunday suit in the middle of a dark cold winter night. The temperature was near zero and a bitter cold wind put my ears at frostbite risk. So after a mile or so, I took one sock off, put that black Sunday shoe back on the stockingless foot, put the sock over one hand and held that stockinged hand over one ear. That kept one hand and one ear warm, and every so often, I switched to the other hand and ear, needing to swing one arm while running. The alternation kept both hands and ears warm half the time and eliminated the frostbite risk. I also knew that if I ran too much I would get so wet with sweat that hypothermia might be a risk. So I ran 90% of the time, with occasional short walks to keep me from getting too sweaty in Sunday suit. I was 6 or 7 miles from Monticello when Claude Lacy, the county sheriff, picked me up and took me home as he was headed home and lived in Blanding too. Good man. I have always appreciated him for that. That gave me 3 hours sleep before getting up to go to work.

Perhaps 1985 is when Bill Redd's grocery store sponsored a drawing for a bicycle. Kenny Shumway, bless his heart, tells the story best, getting as choked up as Silvia and I did when we heard it. Joseph and Sheila had both entered their names in the drawing barrel, along with a hundred others. Kenny Shumway said he watched Joseph (11) and Sheila (8) come into the store every day to look at that bike. It was apparent to him that they wanted it very badly, especially Joseph. In fact, Joseph slept by the phone the night before the morning that they were to call the winners. Kenny said that he wanted to give them the bike, that he had a great desire to simply let them have it. But the drawing must go on as specified: the drawing would be Saturday morning. He waited until the Friday night before the drawing and reasoned that if he drew the name that night, then he would not have to come in so early the next morning. So he stirred the canister of papers and drew a name—either Sheila or Joseph. He was happy, but then thought about it, and thought about the rule—that the drawing would be Saturday morning. He decided he had better do it as specified. So he came in Saturday morning, stirred the papers in the canister again, reached deep, and drew a name—the other Stubbs, Joseph or Sheila. He was very happy and knew it belonged to that family. Kenny would get choked up telling the story. Then he called our house and there was Joseph, lying down by the phone to answer and then holler to us, "We won the bike!"

One quality of Silvia is that she is generous. She once gave away my truck—my beloved International pickup—because she thought someone else needed it more than we did. That may have been the case, but I would not have been so generous. As a child, she once gave her favorite dress to someone who needed a dress.

One Saturday evening, May 4, 1985, a special atmosphere prevailed from the start. At some point during the community dance, it was as if my spiritual eyes were opened to see Silvia as if in another

realm. I could not tell if she looked different or if my perceptions were opened to see her differently, but she looked supernaturally wonderful in some way. I looked around at others to see if anyone else was seeing it in Silvia or if it was just me. She looked familiar as if from eons ago—not my wife of 14 years at the time. I could not quit staring at her. She could feel something unusual as well. She told me to quit staring, but later admitted she felt like a Princess of Eternity—feeling an enhanced sense of who she really is. That perception lasted several minutes. Was it a special condescension from Heaven after all the temple work we were doing that year?

When we moved to Blanding, I thought I had no relatives here. Then after knowing them 10 years or more, I discovered that I have three 2nd cousins in town. Kathy Hurst, Winston's wife, is a 2nd cousin on Dad's side, my dad and her mom being 1st cousins. Barbara Lyman, Grant's wife, is a 2nd cousin, our mothers being 1st cousins. And Margie Hurst, William Hurst's wife, her dad and mine are 1st cousins.

Recapture Dam was built in 1983 and within a year or two Recapture Reservoir was filled to become a lake, which granted me a new workout: running 4-plus miles to the reservoir, then shedding shoes and shirt to swim across the lake and back in running shorts, put shirt and shoes back on, then run back to Blanding, for a 9-mile run and most-of-a-mile swim, depending on the water level that year.

In November 1985, my Grandmother Edna Packer Stokes passed away, the last of my 4 grandparents, all of whom were admirable people. Because grandparents are my heritage and history, I wrote "Portrait of a Pair" about my maternal grandparents (Appendix B at the end of this book).

1986 had us moving from the Henry Black house into the Gardner house. We were growing, could use more space, Reed and Becky were moving, so we rented their house. The move gave us new wonderful neighbors: the Pincocks and Frost Blacks across the street, and Dorothy Sanchez next door.

From the late 1970s into the 90s, I was a Seventy and stake missionary. Chuck Harrison was my good humble companion to Chilchinbito. After that, I went to Lake Powell every summer to do sacrament meetings each Sunday evening a few years, because the employees had to work during the day. During those Lake Powell summers we baptized Benjamin Benallie and Nicole Montano, who reminded me of Shana and who was later in the MTC the same time as Shana, also headed for a mission.

Kline headed the Middle School's annual triathlon, would do it every year, and invited me to swim the Reservoir with him every May for training. After some weeks of summer sun, the lake's temperature was tolerable, but in May, the 6,000-foot lake was always cold, but one year very cold. We got a taste of hypothermia: it felt as if a cold steel ball was inside the chest radiating cold from inside outward. We eventually outgrew swimming the reservoir every May. July is better at our elevation.

I am not a teaser, perhaps because neither of my parents were teasers, but one time I could not resist. Connie Stevenson, the Young Women's advisor, called for Shana. I answered, and as I handed the phone to Shana, I said, "You have to tell him you can't date until you're 16." Silvia perked up, made her way toward the phone hoping to overhear. But the conversation was short, the identity clarified, and some quick laps around the kitchen table kept me out of reach of the only one who did ***not*** think it was funny.

Hamburgers for Dinner

Perhaps 1986, Joseph and Sheila, both young, wanted to camp outside (in the backyard) and cook their own dinner over an open fire. Our sizable backyard with a large dirt area was safe for an open fire, so permission was granted and the expeditionary force headed for the wilderness. (The tall weeds of the yard's far corners approximated a wilderness.) They started the fire okay. Then as cooking progressed through successive trips to the kitchen for things they "forgot" to pack for their camping trip, it became apparent that the convenient proximity of the house, kitchen, salt, pepper, catsup, etcetera, was crucial to the success of this expeditionary force.

After they had eaten and darkness had settled upon the expeditionary force, their magnanimous little hearts decided they wanted to treat Mom and Dad to dinner also. So after they ate, they cooked up another

batch of hamburgers over the open fire and invited us out. They had prepared for us a hamburger each and something else. I only remember the hamburger.

As we sat outside in the dark, they served us our plates. I began eating. The hamburger was cooked okay, but was a little gritty. Actually, "a little gritty" is an understatement. At times it seemed like hamburger-flavored sand. Silvia ate only a bite of hers and held it in her mouth until she could discreetly spit it out. But I kept chewing bite after bite until I finished the whole thing. Silvia later admitted to admiring my silent courage and "gritty" determination to finish it. I did not want to ask why it was so gritty right during dinner; that seemed impolite of a guest to drop any hints of dissatisfaction about the food during the meal. However, after the whole thing was down, an overwhelming curiosity compelled me to ask as nonchalantly as possible: "It tasted a little gritty; did a hamburger fall on the ground or anything?"

Staring into the night sky trying to remember, Sheila said, "No." But then she remembered, "O, but the frying pan did catch on fire once while we were cooking them, and we had to throw dirt on it to put the fire out." And some people complain about McDonald's!

1987 was the year I made Silvia laugh so hard that she almost lost unborn Sarah. Silvia was expecting, which always brought on serious levels of toxemia. She was told cayenne pepper improves circulation, so I volunteered to fill the capsules. It was the least I could do; she was having the baby. I was opening a plastic bag of cayenne pepper. The plastic was very tough, but a tug with my teeth worked, except that the pressurized bag caused the pepper to explode out of the bag into my eyes, nose, and mouth. With 3 of 5 senses on fire, my only relief was filling the sink and submerging my whole face under water. Silvia lay on the couch laughing so hard that she could hardly breathe or emit sound. Of course, my head was under water, but even when I came up for air now and then, I could only hear whimpering gasps of wheezing from the couch. We both eventually recovered.

In September, I received a call from BYU. Some faculty members requested a presentation on the Hebrew in Uto-Aztecan. The request was the result of favorable words spread by Dr. Robertson. That was good to know, since I had thought that he was uncertain about the whole thing. About 15 prominent professors were there—Hugh Nibley, my former Egyptian professor, Victor Ludlow and other Hebrew professors, John Robertson and other linguists, John Sorenson, chair of the Archaeology Dept, and others of various relevant disciplines. It was an impressive group, all except the presenter. I came, a tad nervous, but presented some of my findings, after which John Robertson told the group, "I'm seeing things that I did not see before," and he has ever since been the strongest advocate and told of the strength of the case to anyone interested. Others saw it favorably as well. It launched my favor among BYU scholars. Hugh Nibley continued an interest in my research, asked about it when our paths crossed, once invited me to go with him on one of his trips to visit the Hopi, but I was headed to a UA conference in Mexico. I loved Hugh Nibley, such a good kind man. He was like an academic father to me.

I had barely finished the presentation when Silvia was getting dangerously high blood pressure again. She was put in the hospital for tests and monitoring. It was determined that a continuing pregnancy would be more dangerous for Silvia than a slightly early birth would be for the baby.

So **Sarah Dawn was born September 15th and 16th, 1987**. I'll explain. I did not have a watch, but according to the clock on the wall, Sarah's head came out a minute or two before midnight on Sept 15th. The doctor suctioned fluids out of her mouth and nose, cleaned her face, made sure she was breathing and crying, checked a few other things, then a minute or two after midnight, according to the clock on the wall, he pulled the rest of her out on the 16th. I was curious what he was going to record as her birthday. After more cleaning and handing her to a nurse, he looked at his watch and wrote down the 15th. Maybe his watch was slower than the wall clock, I do not know. But I have a hard time remembering whether her birthday is the 15th or 16th, because in my mind it was both—her head on the 15th, the rest of her the 16th. Sarah was our first baby not born during finals week—because I was not going to school.

Now that several BYU scholars were interested in the Hebrew apparent in Uto-Aztecan, I dove back into the research again. So in—

1988 I completed a fuller monograph. It created considerable interest among more BYU scholars. Also about this year was the 3rd year that I ran Monticello's July 24th 5K race. One year (1986 or 1987) I ran it in 16 ½ minutes (ca. 5:20-25 per mile) and won handily; the next year was a little slower, but I still won, just not quite as handily, but not bad for pushing 40. The third year, I had not trained for it and did not feel ready to compete, but I was curious how my acquaintances in Monticello would do, so I drove there to watch. The Jensen twins, who were good runners and later ran in college, competed 2 or 3 of those years, taking 2nd and 3rd. But as I stood around in my jeans, flannel shirt, and tennis shoes, waiting for the race to start, Joe Davis and others began needling me to run. I said, "But I did not come dressed for it and have not done the increased workouts that I usually do the two weeks before a race. I just came to watch how you guys do." After a few more minutes of persevering encouragement, I decided to appease their requests. I was at least wearing tennis shoes, though new jeans do not bend well for striding easily. Nevertheless, I won again, by barely this time, and a sizeable trophy was the prize. Arriving back home in Blanding, I walked through the front door with the tall trophy, and Shana burst out laughing, instantly figuring out what had happened.

In the spring, I went to watch Joseph in the middle school track meet. The boys wanted their teachers to race them in the 4x100 relay: Nick Mose, Jim Shumway, Kline Carroll and they needed one more. I was enlisted. We barely beat the 8th grade boys. Time to quit racing kids.

In the summer of 1988 Joseph got in trouble for my mistake when I subbed for him mowing one of his lawn jobs. I accidentally clipped a sprinkler head and forgot about it, until he was falsely accused, then I remembered and explained to the owners that I did it, not Joseph. Getting in trouble for what others did was only one of his talents. He also got in trouble for things he **DID** do. Only sometimes mistaken for an angel, he was working his way through a fairly typical teen list of hair-brained ideas to find out one by one that they were not great ideas—like getting kicked out of the public pool for riding his bicycle off the high-dive. A rather unique trick worth watching, I would say, but I was not there.

Stunts aside, Joseph was a good boy who had a soft heart for the underdog and helped people. One example of his kindness and compassion was when Burt Jackson was in an accident. Joseph heard of it, and of his own free will and initiative, he took a shovel over to the Jackson home and spent a day weeding his yard (lesson 13: do people good). Not many young teens do that on their own; many do it when organized in a group project or otherwise encouraged by an adult, but he did it all on his own.

We once had a white van, paid $300 for it. It was a good van—mostly. Drove it some years. Memory Maker should have been its name. Some of the kids wanted me to drop them off 2 blocks from the school so as not to be seen with our mostly white van, or pinto van with the rust spots. When Shana was on the high school drill team, we parents took turns, a week each, picking up the girls at 5:30 for the 6 a.m. practices. Our van was perfect in size to fit all the girls sitting on the seatless metal floor in back. Its only imperfection (other than looks and lack of seats) was that its carburetor sometimes stalled on left turns. The girls would have to get out and push, sometimes in snow, to get us started again. Some weeks had passed and I wondered if I had missed my next turn. I asked Shana about it, and she said that the girls all agreed that I did not have to take a turn any more. Another time that old 300-dollar van caravanned with 6 new cars to a California Stokes reunion. During the 2,000-mile round trip, our $300-dollar rust bucket was the only vehicle that did not break down or have car-trouble of some kind.

In the fall of 1988 Joseph was 14 and old enough for his first hunting season. I went hunting my first few years in Blanding, but not having grown up with it, it was not strong in my blood. I could live without it. In fact, after 3 or 4 seasons of hoping to get a deer, but not "bagging" one, I later found myself in the pines actually hoping that I did not get a good shot, because I did not feel like killing it, cleaning it, and dragging it. "So what in the heck am I doing up here?" I thought to myself. "Let the hunters have their 2 weeks, and I have the mountains to myself the other 50 weeks of the year." So I went home and was finished hunting. Besides, for the cost of gas, apparel, and bullets for target practice, I could use that

same money and buy packages of meat at the grocery store guaranteed every year vs. paying out the money for a maybe once in a few years! So I stopped hunting when Joseph was little.

However, Joseph grew up in Blanding with the culture of the hunt and the conversations at school, so when he became old enough, he very much wanted to go hunting. I agreed, figuring there was no better way to learn that you are not likely to get one than to try it a few seasons. So he earned his certificates, license, we did target practice, and opening morning we were on the mountain with Kartchners. Joseph and I went a separate way, picking out a spot on the mountainside. I was not hunting, only Joseph. Instead of a rifle, I was packing a backpack of lunch and books to read and was looking forward to really enjoying this hunt. So we found our spot and I pointed to a patch of pines where deer might be. As he traipsed away, I spread out my day camp of blanket, books, lunch, cookies, and sat down to enjoy a day of studying languages, confident that I had a whole day of study time. What happier way to spend a day than having a whole day to read and study in the beautiful mountains? That was my thinking. Five minutes into this all-day vacation that I had planned for myself and barely on page two of my first book, I heard a shot. It came from the direction I had sent Joseph. Then I heard him yell, "Dad, I think I got one!"

I closed the book, hurried toward his call, and sure enough: his first shot, in the first 5 minutes of the first day of his first hunting season, he got a 3-point. Unbelievable! So we cut its throat and spent the day gutting, cleaning, dragging, and transporting the deer.

1989 had me working on an article for the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. The Church was assembling an Encyclopedia on the history, doctrine, etcetera of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. My two Hebrew-UA monographs evidently impressed enough people that I was invited to write the article "Book of Mormon Language" in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (in volume 1: 179-181, New York: Macmillan, 1992). Dan Ludlow, our friend from Indiana days, was the over-all editor, and Kent Brown, BYU's Coptic scholar, was my immediate supervisor or first editor over my article.

Also in 1989, I presented "The Hidden Challenge for Second Language Learners: The Subconscious Mind's Role in Language Acquisition" at the state's Community College Conference in Saint George, Utah. That went well and opened a lot of eyes as to the real underlying complexities of language that most people have no idea of, including English teachers. It is now in *Morsels for the Mind*.

In the spring of 1989, Joseph was in 9th grade and ran the 400 meters in track. I watched in Monticello one afternoon as he ran the 400 in 56 seconds—a very impressive time for a 9th grader—and he beat the 10th, 11th, and 12th graders of all the schools. A 56 in 9th grade might mean 50 or so by 12th grade. His grandfather, my dad, also ran the quarter-mile in 56 seconds in 9th grade. I doubt that I could have run a 56 quarter-mile in 9th grade, though I was never timed, yet it seemed interesting to me that both my dad and my son did. For Dad, all such extracurricular activities stopped after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941, Dad's 16th birthday. Nevertheless, my dad was always fast.

Shortly after that, in May 1989, at age 40, I ran my last competitive race in which I was competitive. The SJHS Indian club sponsored a 5K race (3.1 miles) and invited any in the county to participate. I decided to enter, rigored my workouts two-weeks, rested the day before as always, and felt a premonition that I should invite the family to come and watch, that it would be a good race, a close race, and that I would win, but barely. All those details were in the premonition. But the family had watched my 4th of July races most years, and this also was a morning race and on a Saturday no less, so I did not want to ask them to get up early on their sleep-in day to come and watch old Dad run another race. How boring is that for a kid? So I simply went myself to run the race. Yet every detail happened as given me. Among Native Americans are many good runners. For example, the little Shiprock High School in Navajoland often places well in national cross-country meets. At this Blanding race were several good runners besides the best high school runners, including Micah Ewart, who had just taken 3rd place in state in the two-mile only a week earlier. We started and a half dozen or so were in the leading pack for two miles. During the 3rd mile, the group thinned out such that three of us kept together at the front as others fell further back. Eventually it became a two-man race. With a quarter mile left, it was Micah and me.

With 300 hundred yards left we both began a relaxed sprint, both of us smug in the thought that we each knew that we had another gear that the other did not know about yet. With close to 200 yards left, we each hit that next gear, and I think we were both a little surprised to find that the other also had that gear. With 100 yards left we both searched for another gear, giving it everything we had. That was a long 100 yards. But I barely edged ahead of Micah by a yard or two. At age 40, I beat the best high-school runner in the county, 3rd best 2A two-miler in the state, and every detail happened as given me the day before. Little did I know that 6 months later would be Joseph's death, and that burden along with aging would combine to phase me out of being competitive in county races. I settled into running for health. But Joseph was yet very much alive the summer of 1989, and he and I did the river trip.

Don Smith and I were usually the faculty in charge of the Summer Experience San Juan River trip each year, from Bluff to Mexican Hat. If raft room allowed, Don and I each took one of our children along. The summer of 1989, I took Joseph, who generally enjoyed outdoor doings. While loading gear and pumping up rafts, most were excited, while helping, joking, or giggling. Joseph's initial enthusiasm, mildly perceptible, seemed to wane as he listened to the girls giggle. His bewildered expression seemed to say: how hard can this be if the plan includes that the likes of these survive? Survival? Plans? I guess we did have a general plan to help everyone return safely.

After a dry winter, the river was low and slow, yet it was a new experience for most in the group. As the large rubber rafts glided into the river's flow, the quiet smoothness dispelled the non-swimmers' fears, and everyone had life-vests. We calmly enjoyed the serene scenery … about 60 seconds. Suddenly some boys used the bailing buckets to drench passengers on the next raft, and the water fights were on, with only brief truces of ceasefire over the next 2 days. It happened so every year.

By late afternoon we anchored at the evening's camping spot. Joseph and I found a place with a relatively sparse ant population. No place was entirely free of ants, so we camped where there were the fewest. Plus, ants usually crawl in their holes for the night, right? The area was a sandy flat between the river and the towering cliffs that rose in successive tiers of massive walls on both sides of the river.

At the campsite, we hung our sleeping bags and sandwiches out to dry on boulders 4 feet high. Plastic bags are usually water-proof, but the rambunctious water fights caused leakage that dampened the trip in more ways than one. We hoped that the sleeping bags might dry by bedtime and that the sandwiches might dry by breakfast. While preparing for dinner, we found our matches to be as soggy as the sandwiches. Begging a dry match, we started a fire to warm the two large cans of chili beans that we brought for dinner. As we watched the coals slowly heat our beans, the conversation went like this:

"Boy, am I hungry!"

"Me, too."

"What's the big difference between cold beans and warm beans, anyway?"

"Nutritional value is the same; in fact, maybe the extra heating might even kill some nutrients." That's all the encouragement we needed. We both fished our cans from the coals, and found that the decision took so little time that the cans were not even hot yet. We began eating from our cans.

"Not bad."

"Besides that, it's spiced so hot that my burning mouth can't tell that we didn't heat it up."

"Yeah, it tastes plenty hot to me too."

"Not only that, but if we had heated them up, we couldn't hold the cans in our hands."

"Yep, that was close."

"And by the time the cans were cooled off enough to hold, the beans would've been cold again."

Such brilliant rationalizations convinced us that we had done everything just right. The sleeping bags mostly dried out by dark, and we slept, but by morning, ants were all over the peanut-butter-honey sandwiches. How do they find sandwiches on a rock 5 feet off the ground? And where did they all come from? That many ants were not within 50 feet the night before. We brushed off most of the ants and ate a few with the sandwiches. I had no qualms about eating ants. Whenever little honey ants got into a jar of honey, I do not throw away good honey, but continue making peanut-butter-honey sandwiches with it

until it is gone and pretend that the crunch is the crunchy peanut butter. One hears and reads that ants are a good survival food, and mixed in with peanut-butter and honey is probably the best way to eat them.

One other way in which that river trip was different than others was that the wind was blowing so hard upstream and the river so slow in spots, that sometimes we remained stationary—the upstream wind being as strong as the downstream current. We had to paddle to go downstream. It was a long trip.

In the fall of 1989, Shana was a senior, and she and her friend Marilyn Black (Pemberton) decided to do cross country simply for exercise, for a daily jog to keep in shape a little, with no real plans for the pains of being competitive. The day came for a big multi-school cross country meet. The runners were given their numbers to pin on their jerseys before the race. Shana and Marilyn noticed that their numbers were a different color than the rest of the San Juan High runners. They were puzzled and curious, so they asked what the different colors meant. It was explained to them that their numbers were junior varsity numbers (per past performances) while the rest of the team had varsity numbers. That way junior varsity performances would not detract from the varsity score.

The more Shana thought about it, the madder she got, so that by the time the race started, she was ready to run like no one had seen her run before. Nick Mose's daughter, Nicolette, was also on the San Juan team and was the best runner in the state, state champion the year before, etc. She won and Shana took second out of 70 or so, beating dozens of runners, including all the best runners of all the other high schools, but they could not count her 2nd place finish because she had a JV number.

Bill Redd—Friend, Businessman, and County Commissioner

Also in the fall of 1989, Shana was a 17-year-old senior when one Sunday she needed to leave church to perform a musical number in another ward. Unaware of her need for the family car, I took it to do an errand; so it was absent when she needed it. Connie Stevenson, her generous Young Women's teacher, told Shana to borrow her car, that it was a certain color, parked at the northwest corner of the building, and that the keys were under the front seat.

Nearly late, Shana hurried out, found a car of that description at the northwest corner of the building, took the keys from under the seat, and drove off. When she returned, Connie asked Shana why she had not borrowed her car as she offered. Shana replied that she had and thanked her. They went outside and Shana pointed out which car she had taken. Connie said, "That's not my car; this is my car, and I came out just after you had left, and it was still here."

Two cars happened to fit the description and both had keys under the seat. Mike Halliday, our local police officer friend, happened to be standing nearby, so they asked him if he knew whose car Shana had borrowed. He went to call in the license number and returned to inform them that the car belonged to Bill Redd, our San Juan County Commissioner. At the very moment that Mike was giving them that information, Bill Redd approached, handing Shana some music and said, "Here's some music you left in the car."

Bill Redd had known our family for years, and in a later conversation with him, we heard his view of the incident: He walked out of the church to see Shana driving away in his car. But he was not unduly concerned, though he could not help but be curious. As he later told us, "I figured she must need my car more than I did." So he simply waited for Shana's return, though she was gone long enough for a musical number elsewhere. Bill's good-natured personality is rare: few would accept an episode of their car being temporarily stolen as graciously as Bill Redd did.

However, their paths crossed again two years later when Shana was crowned Miss San Juan County Queen. Bill Redd, as County Commissioner, was to introduce the queen at the state competition, where he collected a little humorous revenge, introducing her as "the young lady who stole my car."

Those who shopped regularly at Bill's Blanding Mercantile enjoyed hearing his contagious laugh echo through the store. His wit had others laughing with him. For example, at the end of each month I paid off the grocery account we accumulated that month. One month I approached him at his accounting desk, "Just came to pay Bill the bill." He handed me the receipt and said, "And I'll give Stubbs the stub."



The only photo of all 7 of us, early 1988: clockwise from Sarah, a few months old, Jessica close to 7, Sheila close to 11, Joseph close to 14, Shana close to 16, Silvia and Brian close to 39.

Joseph

Wednesday, December 20, 1989, at age 15½, Joseph shot himself. This is a summary of what I said at Joseph's funeral, December 22nd, written down during the weeks after. "Getting it out" and down on paper was mildly therapeutic, as if getting it out of me and put somewhere else, but hardly:

We are deeply grateful for the good people of this community, who have shown us so many kindnesses. At a time like this, all wonder what they could have done. "Maybe if I had done this or that" we all think to ourselves. Yet no one is in a more responsible position than I, Joseph's father. As head of the house that was his, I feel the responsibility more than anyone, if any remaining mortals can be blamed.

After two days of crying, I awoke this morning (Dec 22) thinking that maybe the tear wells had finally run dry. But when I saw Joseph's football in a flower arrangement, I wept anew and could hardly stop. I realized that we would not be playing catch any more. We quite often played catch, from the time he was 3 years old—first, with a rubber ball that I would toss gently from only 4 feet away. As he grew older and bigger, the distance increased, though I still had to be careful how hard I threw the ball, until the last couple of years, when he could throw harder than I could. Then I had to be careful how I caught the ball. We enjoyed those times of playing catch together with baseball or football.

Joseph was a good boy; he had a good heart. He had considerable compassion for the downtrodden and unfortunate. He wanted to adopt all the Wednesday children (orphans for adoption) that were shown on the local news. He did his share of teasing, but when a person was down or needed help or comfort, he would do or give what help or comfort his awkward stage of youth was capable of. On one occasion when his mom was feeling low, he spoke a word of comfort and gave her a hug. How many 15-year-old boys do that? When my Dad took his grandsons Joseph, Justin, and others on a camping trip,

Dad remarked how Joseph could see that Justin was suffering some kind of pain or discomfort and mentioned it to his Grampa and showed concern for Justin. It was soon found that Justin had a brain tumor that had to be surgically removed. I often walked into Joseph's room to find him on his knees at his bedside praying without having been reminded.

Though Joseph could be contrary at times, more often he was pleasant and enjoyable. He was one to help kids have fun. When among a group of younger children, he would organize some fun that usually had to be moved outside. He also felt bad about putting people out, if he realized how much he had put them out. When we would play catch, if he accidentally threw the ball over my head, he would apologize in a tone that showed a genuine remorse for making his old dad go after the ball.

So if he was a good boy and if my wife and I are decent parents, how or why did this happen? I have decided that I know less now than ever, but I wonder if much of it was a misunderstanding of life. The times and feelings of youth are intense. The passing of more years lessens the intensity for both good and bad. We older people know that with time and even the next day, life can look different. But in the intensities of youth, woes can seem overwhelming or unbearable.

One major factor began before he was born. Silvia eventually had to have all of our five children by C-section. Joseph was our second, thus one more attempt at a normal delivery. Silvia was in hard labor for 16 hours with Joseph before the decision was made to take him by C-section. Silvia's water had broken at the beginning of that 16 hours, so there was no cushion for his head and body. Joseph's head and little body bore the full force of the contractions from the one direction but could not exit the non-dilating direction. The pressures on him and his head must have been tremendous. There was a monitor placed on him while in the womb, and it showed tremendous stress on his heart. His heart even stopped beating two different times. The nurses could not bear to watch and went out of the room, being helpless to do anything until the doctor arrived, leaving Silvia and me alone to watch the monitoring needle showing the stress on Joseph's heart.

For several months after Joseph was born, he would not let anyone hold him close. If he felt enveloping arms around him, he would explode in screams, with arms and legs flying out, fighting it. I am sure that it was due to the birth experience, the crushing enveloping that tortured him for 16 hours. When a baby is outside the womb, we can hear its cries, but in the womb, his cries could not be heard and could not be helped, and the excruciating pain continued without deliverance for 16 hours. Thus, enveloping arms were too much like the enveloping torture of the womb, and he would not let anyone hold him close. Silvia could not cuddle, love, and comfort him like she could the other children when babies. He could hardly be close to people. He wanted to be loved, but not close enough to be loved—literally and figuratively—though perhaps not much different than many teens. His sometimes rowdy rambunctious nature often prevented potentially loving or positive feelings from others.

Another result of that unmerciful birth process, I believe, was his rejection of any pain he did not understand. His screaming in pain for 16 hours with no one to hear and none to deliver seemed to instill in him a fear that some pains of life have no deliverance. On the other hand, some pains he bore so well and uncomplainingly that his courage was admirable and moving. He once put up with an earache uncomplainingly, without telling anyone, until after the eardrum ruptured in the night.

I know at times he was picked on or teased enough that some days he did not want to go to school. He bore with some disappointments, but all youngsters (and adults) bear with disappointments periodically. In some ways he excelled. He ran a 56-second 400-meters that spring in 9th grade, winning first place over the best quarter-milers of four high school track teams, competing against 10th, 11th, and 12th graders. Few experience success like that. He perhaps exaggerated the negative in his own mind, forgetting the positive, as we all do sometimes.

He liked girls a lot. Once when he was about 11, he learned that a girl, whom he liked, liked someone else. He came home and went to his room, the first pangs of love. I could almost cry with him—one of the most difficult pains of life, that all experience at various points.

One night he needed to write an essay. He again sat struggling, not knowing how to start. We went to the library, looked up some facts he might use, talked about organization a bit, and then he began. When he finished, I read it and was pleased with it. Knowing his level of writing previously, I could see that it was a great improvement, a perfectly decent essay, and he knew I saw it that way, and he felt good about himself. Even Silvia commented later after he went to bed: "What did you guys do over there at the college? He came home so happy." And he *was* happy. He had done a good job on something he thought he could not do. We had a very good feeling between us that night. I am grateful for the memory and many others.

That morning, December 20th, we awoke and read scriptures as usual. Joseph was not feeling well, so it was agreed that he could go back to bed and stay home from school that day. Silvia was home tending a few children all day. I spent the winter day digging out a mucky plumbing problem at a rental, as it was my first day of Christmas break after getting grades in.

That evening Joseph got up and was talking and laughing with the family—his usual jovial self right up until we left. Just before we went our different ways for the evening, there occurred my last memory of Joseph—a certain smile. Silvia and the girls were sitting around the family room, I was standing by the woodstove, and Joseph was lying on the floor on his back throwing a ball in the air and catching it. We were talking and laughing with as good a feeling as ever, and at one point one of the younger girls said something that was a little funny, but something at which a laugh may have hurt her feelings. As that was said, Joseph and I happened to look at each other, both thinking the same thought—thinking it funny, but deciding not to laugh. We simply smiled at each other. It was an understanding smile—an understanding of not wanting to hurt the feelings of the younger one who spoke. He did not always demonstrate that degree of consideration, as many teenage boys laugh at whatever strikes them funny, regardless of feelings; but to know that one of his last deeds was being considerate enough of a little sister's feelings to refrain from laughing at her is a touching last memory for me.

That last Wednesday night, December 20th, we went different directions, as usual. Shana went to the basketball game with friends. Silvia went to a Relief Society project and took the younger girls with her. I went to help with Blanding Second Ward's Christmas party at the Stake Center. The plan was for me to pick up Silvia and the girls at the North Chapel on my way home after I finished. I usually enjoy watching good people having a good time. But after I finished my part (signing names in Hebrew), I sat to enjoy the festivities, but it was an empty feeling, so I left the Stake Center about 8:40 p.m. When I arrived at the North Chapel, the Relief Society room was dark, the door near it was locked, and there were hardly any cars around—two at the northwest back door, a typical number and place for the extraction workers. I naturally assumed that someone had given Silvia and the girls a ride home already, so I headed for home. It turned out that Silvia and a few others were kept late, but were working in the Young Women's room on the other side of the chapel.

When I came home, the house was quiet. Joseph was not on the living room couch watching a ball game on TV like usual, so I headed for Joseph's room to see if he had gone to bed early, as he occasionally does when tired or not feeling well.

Some moments seem to happen in slow motion. As I turned the corner to the doorway of his room, I first saw his legs lying on the floor; and in the split second before my momentum carried me to a fuller view, I wondered why he fell asleep on the floor instead of on his bed. But in the next stride I saw his headless form, everything above the neck gone, except the very back of his skull, and a blood-soaked carpet at his neck. Our .30-06 deer hunting rifle, still in his loosened grasp, lay in front of him. Nothing could be done. I went and knelt down by him, put my hand on his back, with my eyes toward his feet, and groaned: "O Joseph!" I knelt some moments in helpless emotion difficult to describe.

I then arose to think what to do. My first concern was the family. I knew they would soon be coming from all directions, and I did not want them to walk in on this. I went to the phone to call Bishop Webb and Mike Halliday—Bishop Webb to help me with the family and Mike Halliday—neighbor, friend, and police officer—to handle whatever needed to be done. As I waited for the phone to ring at

Bishop Webb's house, I remember looking at my watch, noticing it was close to 9 p.m. and wondering when Silvia and Shana might be coming. Sister Webb answered and said that the Bishop was not home, but was at the church in a meeting. I told her what had happened and that I thought Silvia might also still be at the chapel and asked her if she could call him and tell him to detain Silvia there until I arrived there. I did not want any of my family to learn of it until I could be with them. She offered her home as a place for the family to gather while the police did their job. Mike arrived, and I walked with him to the back of the house, near enough to point the way to Joseph's room. I told him I was going to find my family, and began driving to the North Chapel.

In the meantime, this is what was happening to Silvia the last part of Relief Society. They were basically finished by about 8 o'clock and ready to go home, but things kept happening to detain them. She and Lou Mueller were the last ones there, and felt that they were in slow motion the whole last hour they were there. When finally ready to leave, they noticed a light on in the hallway by the bishop's office and so they went that direction to turn it off; otherwise, they would have missed the bishop who had just received the message and returned. As Silvia and Lou were walking, the box of materials that Sister Mueller was carrying fell off her shoulder. She said that she had a secure hold on it, and that it felt like someone just pushed it off her shoulder. Having to pick up the things detained them long enough to meet the bishop, who walked in as they were finishing picking up the materials. The bishop told Silvia he needed to talk to her and asked Lou to take the children.

The bishop knew, but since I had asked that he not tell Silvia until I arrived, he only said to Silvia that there had been an accident with Joseph. I soon arrived. Silvia had hoped for a recoverable accident, but she said that when I walked in, she could see the gravity of it in my face. She was seated in a chair. I knelt down beside her, but could not speak, only bow my head and cry. She asked if Joseph was gone. I nodded a yes. We wept together, but not long. We needed to find the children. I figured Shana would be arriving home any time. I drove Silvia toward the bishop's house. Silvia said she wanted to go to Carrolls, our good friends. I started to get out to go in with her and to tell them, before leaving Silvia there. But Silvia said she would be fine and wanted me to hurry on finding the children.

Silvia said that as she walked from the van to Carroll's porch, that she felt a stillness and peace come over her—a stillness and peace similar to the special experience she had in connection with Joseph just prior to his birth, when she heard her name called. She said she felt as if Joseph was present, and that it was a message from his heart to hers—I love you, mom; all is well. She said that as I made a U-turn and drove away, and just after the special peace, that it seemed she sensed Joseph's presence whirling around to hurry after the departing van to where the children were waiting.

In the meantime, Sister Lou Mueller had left the North Chapel with the three younger girls. She said that she felt like she was not to go to our house. She drove aimlessly around the city. But there seemed no logical reason to keep doing that indefinitely, so finally she drove to our house. She saw the police car there and knew that something was terribly wrong. Sister Webb quietly informed Sister Mueller what had happened and Sister Webb took the girls to her house.

I arrived at the Webb's home. My precious little girls were sitting on the couch, having no idea what had happened. I knelt down by Sheila, the nearest and oldest, put my arm around her, but could not speak, only kneel, bow, and cry. I could not bring myself to tell such tender little hearts the news. I could only hold them, with a heart bursting with love and grief for them.

Returning from the game, Shana, Beverly and Amber's gas pedal got stuck. It had never happened before. The half hour it took to get it unstuck delayed them as needed. When they came to drop Shana off, they saw the police car and hearse at the house. Shana was hoping that it might be a joke until she was told to go to Webb's house. I had been kneeling in tears with Sheila and Jessica for only a short time when Shana arrived, Bev and Amber walking in with her.

As Shana walked in, she burst into tears, asking: Is it Joseph? I held her and muddled a 'yes'. O, the agony I saw on her face as she burst into tears with the question! The struggle I felt within her as I held her! The younger girls had not cried yet, not yet knowing, but had only seen me weep while kneeling

beside them. But at this, they knew it was something tragic, and Sheila and Jessica began to cry. I put Shana in Bev's arms, so that I could go hold the little ones who were now crying. I was grateful that good friends like Bev (Shana's age) and Amber (Joseph's age) were nearby for Shana and each other, all sobbing by this time.

I cried with my little eight-year-old, tender-hearted Jessica on my lap. About this time Silvia arrived with the Carrolls. Kline sat next to me, put his arm around me, and held me nearly as much as I was holding Jessica. Two-year-old Sarah only watched from Sister Webb's arms, quietly wondering what was going on, but never cried nor made a fuss. When older, Sarah told how she remembered that night and knew that she was to be good and not fuss, because the family was having a very hard time. As Jessica and Sheila were both crying, I set Jessica in Kline's arms on his lap and went to hold Sheila on my lap—my twelve-year-old, taller than either Silvia or Shana. But that did not matter; she was still my little girl. Sheila sobbed like I have never seen, yet how much better it felt to sob with her than away from her. We held the children until they cried themselves to sleep.

Word must have spread quickly, for within a short time several people were arriving at Webb's house. However, tragedy does not cancel the need for necessities, and if we were to stay the night at Webb's, we would need Sarah's bottle, diapers, etc. So I walked the three blocks to our house. I was offered rides, but I wanted to walk and be alone a few minutes.

As I walked, I thought. All I had heard all my life was the repetition of the common misbelief that suicide was equivalent to murder, which view has since been rectified or modified considerably. Nevertheless, at that point I had not yet read the Ensign article on suicide, written by M. Russell Ballard in the October 1987 issue, which agreed with what I had always thought, and doctrinally allowed the feelings that I was feeling. For it made sense to me that we do not know and cannot judge, that only Heavenly Father can, and that some undoubtedly may not necessarily miss out on eternal blessings, even if it was a poor decision that must be overcome. For I had known a few people who had taken their own lives, and all were sensitive, caring people, who would not think of harming anyone else; and even though it may be a profound mistake, I never could see it equivalent to killing another. Nevertheless, according to the common belief that I had heard many times, was Joseph damned for eternity? all hope for exaltation lost? In contemplating the possibility, I stared eternity in the face. The breadth, depth, and intensity of feeling and thought was like eternity itself, though experienced each moment. I felt that it was more my fault than Joseph's, that I should have been aware of his pain to help him through it. And therefore I decided in my own mind that if it is true that he has forfeited his chance for exaltation, then I would suffer for Joseph as soon as I could, this side or the other. If a price must be paid and if I can, I will pay when I arrive where Joseph is and make things right for Joseph, God willing, and finish the job of being Joseph's father, even if I must give up my own exaltation in order to give Joseph mine. In fact, I prayed that very detail: If things are that way, then give my exaltation to him instead of to me.

I no sooner prayed that thought than the Comforter rushed into me with such strength that it nearly lifted me off the ground, entirely enveloping my being, with a lifting feeling of "you do not need to worry about that at all" and lifted right out of me all concern and worry for Joseph's eternal welfare. I had just completed the 3-block walk and had just prayed that prayer when I arrived at our house, and was in mid-stride just stepping from the street up onto the curb at the stairway to the house when that most tangible, unmistakably real, and almost physical enveloping and cleansing of all worry and concern occurred. It was so instantaneous and powerful that it nearly lifted me off my feet. I stopped and stood still, on the curb, facing my house, marveling at what I had just experienced and the power of the comfort. It felt as if the Holy Spirit wrapped around every particle of burden and anxiety within me and literally lifted the whole of it out of me and in its place spread throughout my soul a calm, a peace, and even a subdued joy that all is well and would be well with Joseph, and that no eternal eventualities are lost to him, and not to worry about that at all.

I realized later that the Lord may have wanted me to make that offering. It was not until I willingly offered my eternity for Joseph's that then came the most unmistakably clear and powerful comfort

imaginable. That experience and November 16, 1968, in the mission field have been the two most powerful spiritual experiences to date, trailed by hundreds of other smaller ones. I know God lives and loves us. That experience was more real than any rock or other tangible reality.

I gathered the necessary things and sat on the couch a moment as the policemen worked. In another moment Kline arrived, sat down beside me, just to be there with me. By the time Kline and I returned to Webb's house, other friends and neighbors had arrived. In fact, within the next few days we would realize how much like a large loving family most Blanding people are and how many friends we truly had.

After the weepings had slowed, we sat quietly around Webb's living room for a time. Dennis Gutke suddenly spoke up and said something to the effect: "I have just felt the most wonderful peace and feeling that Joseph is okay, that all is well, that he is being taken good care of."

I told him that that is exactly what I had been feeling too. I had not said anything of the powerful comforts that the Spirit had given me, because what does my opinion count of perceptions of the spirit? Besides, some might think my views to be the contrived hopes of a bereaved father. Dennis' statement was perhaps an hour and a half after my experience, but on a sudden he felt what I had been feeling.

We finally retired about 2 a.m. Our family slept together in the same room in Webb's basement, where they had two double beds—Shana, Sheila, and Jessica in one double bed, and Silvia, Sarah and I in the other. They offered to spread us out more comfortably, but I wanted us all to be together in the same room that night. Togetherness was a greater comfort than having more room. Silvia would ask me about once each hour if I was asleep yet, and I would answer "no." I think I finally fell asleep about 6 a.m., then we awoke at 7 a.m. to start the day of planning the funeral.

During sleep I had forgotten that Joseph was gone. Upon finding myself in Webb's basement, the second realization that he was gone was almost as awful as the first realization the night before. Nevertheless, while lying in bed during those morning minutes I had another feeling given me: that Joseph would progress to such an extent on the other side, that when we meet him again, we will be in awe at who he is and what he has become.

Sister Webb fixed us a nice breakfast, but before we finished eating, others began coming to grieve with us. Among them was Austin Lyman. He said that the night before he was very concerned, and so he prayed, and after he prayed, a comfort came into him and the exact words came to his mind: "Joseph is fine."

We planned the funeral for the next day, Friday, December 22nd. Monday was Christmas, and for the community's sake I wanted the funeral to be as far removed from Christmas as possible, but not envelop Christmas, which meant as soon as possible.

That afternoon Taylor Palmer came by. Taylor was Joseph's Teachers Quorum advisor, a highly skilled craftsmen, later a bishop, a good man, very down to earth, not carried away in things. Taylor said: I have had the strongest feeling all day that Joseph is fine, that all is well with him, that there is nothing to worry about for him over there. Taylor's, Austin Lyman's, and Dennis Gutke's witnesses were all consistent with mine.

That night my parents came, some cousins, and my siblings came from Virginia, Kansas, Wyoming, and other parts of Utah. Later at night, after the children had fallen asleep, we began to talk. I told my Mom, Dad, sister, and Silvia of the feelings I had the night before and had been having all day. I also told them what Dennis Gutke, Austin Lyman, and Taylor Palmer had said.

Silvia called Dad from Carroll's the night before, after I dropped her off there. Silvia said that as she told Dad, he really took it hard. She said she could hardly bear to hear his grief over the phone, being so many miles away and unable to hug him. Dad said that as soon as he hung up, he dropped to his knees by the phone and began to pray, and that as he prayed the same feeling came over him—a comforting assurance that Joseph was fine, and was going to be fine.

Some days later Worthy and Gail Glover came over. They had heard the news the night it happened and sat up talking with their teenagers until two o'clock in the morning. They had a family

prayer, then went to bed. Gail said that she could not sleep, but tossed and turned and worried. After another hour or so, she finally said another prayer herself, privately. She said that as soon as she prayed, that Joseph came into her mind with a rushing of peaceful and good feeling—a clear and sure comfort—after which she soon fell asleep.

Ron McDonald sat doing extraction not many days later. He called us while at the extraction library doing extraction. He could not get Joseph off his mind. While laboring there, he said he suddenly felt a warm, exhilarating feeling of comfort and peace come over him concerning Joseph. He called us immediately and told us about it. He said that he does not have experiences like that very often, but that that one was unmistakably from outside of himself, of the Lord's Spirit.

In all these witnesses that came to us, I have marveled at the goodness and compassion of God, that He would be so merciful and mindful of us simple people and our concerns, sending assurances of comfort to each troubled soul desiring to know about a specific matter. Preston Nielson, our former Stake President, wrote us a comforting letter of similar feelings, and I quote: "We rejoice with you in the truth of the Gospel. We know that all will be well with Joseph and all things will work out for his good." A good man he is and his wife Dorothy Shumway Nielsen an angel, as near as I can tell.

Christmas that year was very different than other years, yet more meaningful, and not so deeply sad, but deep, yes, and as Shana said—"one of our best Christmases"—for we were drawn closer to Him Whom the holiday honors. That Christmas Eve, two days after the funeral, we sat around the living room Christmas tree, talking, but not much interested in presents this year, and it did my heart good to hear Shana say, "this is the most spiritual Christmas."

Another impression occurred to me a week later while running out in the cedar trees. I stopped to walk and think, and I felt an enlightening within, that it was more accident than intended. Regarding the accident aspect, another bishop in town expressed similar feelings: through the whole funeral he felt it was more accident than anything, and that eternal consequences seemed judgmentally non-existent. Nevertheless, I felt a failure as a father to a degree.

Some weeks later, Carrolls arranged for us to have the privilege of visiting with Elder Lloyd P. George of the Second Quorum of Seventy, as he was a friend and acquaintance of the Carroll family. It happened that he knew by personal experience what we had been through. His younger sister at 52 years of age, while her husband was bishop, after her four children were grown and married in the temple—she also took her own life. Brother George mentioned that as he spoke at her funeral, that he could not feel a sadness, but comfort and joy for his sister. He said she was the most spiritual and sweetest person, but was under considerable distress with a seemingly hopeless illness. He quoted Brother Ballard's words, as found in the Ensign article, that we do not know and cannot judge and that Heavenly Father may not judge all such with a harsh judgment either. He said that he felt strongly that Joseph's case is likewise one that we should not worry about. I then told him of the comforts we had received. He said that as I spoke, that the burden was lifted from off him and that he felt it also, that Joseph was fine, and that there was nothing to worry about

In June 1990, six months after Joseph's death, Sarah, our two-year-old, began relating some amazing things. We never told her what happened to Joseph. She was only two, just learning to talk, able to say only a few words, so there seemed no way that we could explain to her where her older brother went. But this one day, after Silvia and Sarah had awakened from a nap together, she began saying the following in the very simple words that she knew:

"Joseph go pxxxx." She made an explosion-like noise with her mouth, pointing with her hand, though I do not think that she even knew what a gun was or had ever seen one. "Joseph fall down." She had fallen down enough that she knew the phrase 'fall down'. But we had never explained to her that Joseph had died, assuming she could not understand the concept of death or how he died or anything about it. "Jesus nice to Joseph." Then she wrapped her little arms around herself as if demonstrating her being held in his arms, and said, "Jesus give me a love—like this. And Jesus love Joseph too."

Some hours later, when Shana came home, Silvia had Shana ask Sarah what happened. Sarah recounted the same series of events. She performed it a few times that week and each time was consistent with the other times. One time Sarah actually fell down to demonstrate the falling down, and she did not fall lying on her back or her stomach, but on her right shoulder, exactly as I found Joseph, on his right side. One time she said "Joseph have owy in his head like Jesus have owy."

Silvia asked, "Where is Jesus' owy?"

Sarah said, "in his hands" and pointed to the palm of each hand. No one taught her that. We had taught her about Jesus, but not about the wounds in his hands, nor had anyone else. She received some kind of communication from the other side, for she knew things no one could explain to her, both about what I had seen on this side and about the state of things on the other side. How wonderful it is to me that Joseph or Jesus or His Spirit would communicate to a little one of such tender years in accordance with her understanding, what happened to her brother. Out of the mouths of babes.

It was a hard year afterwards. Yet as George and Donna Jones said, who had lost a child years before, we must remember to love the remaining children, lest they feel like the one gone is loved more. When we did Joseph's temple work a year later, Brother Kirk Nielson and wife were at the Provo Temple and went through with us. He said that he could feel, as we did, that Joseph wholeheartedly accepted.

1990 Shana graduated from high school. I was feeling like a fairly complete failure as a father, and made miserable efforts to do more with the kids, though I had actually done about as much as most dads, it seemed, but I was no longer sure of anything at that point. So that summer I took Shana and Sheila on a camping trip to the Grand Canyon. I still felt lousy and emotionally mostly dead, and my lack of lively had them enjoying the trip about as much—that is, if they were wishing they were wherever else besides roughing it in places they'd rather not be, who can blame them? Sheila once asked, "And why are we doing this?" I don't remember my exact words, but something like, "We're building memories, so try to remember, as unmemorable as they may seem at the moment." However, one moment that put us in stitches was seeing a tourist gasping up the Grand Canyon trail, arms limp, mouth open, tongue hanging out, depicting fully what many felt. We were barely able to pass him before doubling over with laughter.

Also in the summer of 1990, Shana, Sheila, and Amber Shumway were in a rollover accident on the I-70 freeway east of Green River while returning home. Poor Amber, dutifully taking her turn at driving, reached for something, temporarily lost control, and broke her wrist as the car rolled onto its top then back down onto one side while skidding off the freeway. But considering none had seatbelts, it was a miracle to have only one hand in a cast among 3 girls in a rollover at 70 mph on a freeway. Driving was the simplest way to get the car home from Green River, but with a smashed windshield and roof, how would I not be stopped? But a peace said I would not be, and it was so, though two officers passed me.

Though seemingly in vain, the Grand Canyon hike did spark an interest. As under-thrilled as she seemed that first year, the next year Sheila asked if we were going to do another hike. "Do you want to?" I asked. She said yes. That is all the encouragement I needed, as I like hiking in the boonies. So in—

1991 Shana, Sheila, and I did another hike, this time in the NM mountains. Most memorable was a huge rattlesnake under a bush at the side of the trail, 2 inches in diameter and 5 feet long. The rattlers that I encountered while running in Provo's foothills were only 3 feet long, but still made me jump, from which heights I could survey the area for a safe landing place, as if my trajectory gave me a lot of choices.

That trip, I also dragged Shana and Sheila through a Santa Fe opera. However, just because one opera is wonderful and impressive does not mean that the next one is, and we picked a snoozer.

From then on, Sheila and I did a major hike every summer until she married, and Shana was happy to let Sheila do it for both of them, though later as a mom, Shana enjoyed hiking. The Grand Canyon's south rim became a favorite hike for Sheila and me. We would jog the 8 miles down from the top of the south rim to the river, then walk the 8 miles back up at a good pace, doing the 16 miles in 5 hours. The park rangers stopped us, explaining that one should not try to go to the bottom and back to the top in one

day; it should be a 2-day trip. We had to convince them that we had done this before and that a half day was plenty for us to do what they wanted to make a 2-day trip.

Also in the summer of 1991, Shana entered and won the Miss San Juan County pageant, playing a violin piece. I was proud of her and of all four of my daughters. Gems they all are!

Late 1980s, after graduating from the U of U, I decided it was time to test my finds of Hebrew correlations in Uto-Aztecan (UA) with the world's best Uto-Aztecanists. The BYU scholars and linguists were impressed and interested, but not specialists in UA, so they could not say 'yes'! At a UA conference, I showed them to Karen Dakin, one of the 5 most active in UA research. I told her that I think I found a language related to UA. She wanted to see. I explained the sound correspondences and then showed her 20 or 30 matches that fit those correspondences. She said, "Yes, it all matches. What language is it?"

Fearing she would lose interest if I told her, I said, "Let me show you some more first."

After 20 more, she said, "Yes, the correspondences all work and everything! What language is it?"

"Let me show you a few more," I said. Afterwards she asked a 3rd time what language it was.

I said, "Hebrew." She looked at me, back at the paper, then back at me, and shrugged, "Maybe you have something. The correspondences work."

Then I decided to show Ray Freeze, one of my U of U linguistics professors, who understood UA as well as Wick Miller (the father of UA at the time). I made an appointment and drove the 320 miles to SLC. Ray knew I was LDS, but he was also open-minded. As I showed him the similarities, his jaw dropped lower and lower, and expletives exited every so often, "Oh my _ _! You're kidding! Amazing! Incredible! Oh ____" and others that I cannot repeat. Finally, he said, "You have to show this to Wick."

To be fair, Wick Miller is a good man, helpful, was always good to me (maybe minus this once), yet his personality had me more uneasy about approaching him. But I made an appointment and drove the 340 miles from Blanding to Park City, where he had retired by then. The Hebrew-UA material I took to show him had 200+ new cognate sets plus many old ones corresponding to Hebrew. He listened quietly a few seconds, but at the 2nd or 3rd item, he threw his arms in the air and said, "No, no! It can't be!" He wanted to hear nothing of it. I did not want to waste the effort of a two-day drive, so I left Hebrew out of it, and only showed him the many new cognate sets that I had found in UA. He was excited about those, "Yes, that's right. The sound correspondences all work. That's good!" He had only good to say about all my findings of new UA cognate sets. However, every 4th or 5th set, I would add, "and the Hebrew word happens to be …." to which, he would again react, "No, no, we can't do that!" He never gave me a good reason 'why we can't do that', but was calm as long as Hebrew was not mentioned. That was early 1990s.

Not long after Joseph's death, Christmas of '90 or '91, our ward choir sang Mary's Lullaby by Wanda Palmer. I don't think I ever got through it. It is a beautifully composed song and the words, about a parent losing a child, hit home deeply, and I never did sing through the whole song without crying.

Part Two: Learning to Love Life and Live with the Limp

1992 Joseph's class graduated from SJHS, were always good to us, and invited us to some class reunions. We attended one and it was heart-warming to see the wonderful welcoming young people.

Silvia and I hosted the huge Stokes reunion that summer, near Vallecito Reservoir, north of Bayfield, CO. The yearlong preparations with its approach were stressful, but Silvia had a comforting dream from my recently deceased Uncle Eldon, telling her that all would be fine.

Sometime in the 90s, in Colorado's mountains, I became detoured from returning to the car exactly the same way. Euphemism for lost? No, I knew generally the directions, but as the sun was sinking in the west, I knew that walking in pathless bushes in pitch black would not be good. I prayed and was grateful for a definite and comforting reassurance that I would reach the car before dark, and some time later, I did reach the car after sunset, but before dark.

Perhaps 1992, I attended the conference of the New England Antiquities Research Association at Brown University (John Sorenson encouraged me to go) where Roger Williams Wescott presented and

spoke well of my work. Dr Wescott was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, former president of the Linguistic Association of Canada and the United States, author of 500 articles and 40 books. After his presentation, I introduced myself and we kept up as pen-pals some years afterwards. He always spoke well of my work. I also met Cyrus Gordon, the great Semitic and Ugaritic scholar. We talked about my work briefly: he agreed that UA *-ima and *na- aligned with Northwest Semitic reconstructions *-iima and *na-.

Here I insert a couple of columns that appeared in the Panorama:

Our Classless Clan

My youngest brother once dated a girl from England, who told him that in England, Stubbs is ***NOT*** a high-class name. My responses vary through time: (1) at first, I shrugged it off, not caring in the least what the English thought of the surname they gave me; (2) years later, when reminded, I thought: Europeans worry too much about class! I'm glad my ancestors got out and came to the wide-open wonderful Rockies for some fresh air and fresh ideas. After several revolutions, a disastrous bout with a supreme-race theorist, and endless reruns of Les Misérables, do Europe's survivors still not get it? That class and similar suppositions of superiority cause most of the world's problems!

(3) Another time I thought it ironic that my brother bore the brunt of the bad news for our classless clan, because he actually ***CARED*** what he looked like (in contrast to his oldest brother). He was a meticulous dresser, brand names and all. I've always shopped at Desert Industries. Why pay big bucks when 3 or 4 can buy something as nice and that lasts as long? "As nice?" you ask? Well, maybe it is a matter of opinion, and maybe my lower-class genes/jeans are showing, but the "classy" stores have such a limited variety. All they have is the latest styles! D.I. has all the styles of all ages (of the earth and people). The other stores have 40 copies each of a few kinds of shirts. At D.I. no two shirts are alike so there are hundreds of kinds. Okay, so maybe this is backfiring slightly as I prove the English girl's point—but only if you care about class.

(4) I've never been one to care much about image, as may oft be obvious. When young, I seldom wore a coat in the winter. Some thought that might reflect on the family, like we couldn't afford one. I'd briskly walk the mile and a half to school without a coat, because it was so much bother to keep track of and remember to bring home. People also asked why I walked the three-mile round trip when the bus stop was a block from my house. For me, walking three miles was easier than risking interaction with other people on a bus. My too kind and helping-me-be-'como-la-gente' helpmate mentions I may have had a few personality unusualities for which the terminology had not yet been invented. I gladly wear whatever labels. Being branded names is the only way I wear brand names.

(5) Some class hierarchies did cross the ocean and it is human nature to quickly re-invent those temporarily tabled. In higher education, 'higher' often eclipses 'education'. I visited Brown University in the 90s and the annual tuition of those Ivy League schools could buy a house, while U of U tuition was five percent as much. So why do East-Coast schools charge twenty times the tuition? Because they teach that much more? Hardly! It is because they think they are so much better and their 'higher' education so much 'higher' that their prices are higher. They assume that their professors are more brilliant and that the glitter trickles onto the student body, but those are assumptions and you know what they say about assumptions. Algebra is algebra whether you learn it in high school or Harvard. Linguistics is linguistics at Harvard and U of U. The same books are available worldwide. If you want to know more than a Harvard graduate, read the same books, do more research and more thinking, and then you'll know more. I work with, research with, and communicate with Harvard grads and Ivy League cum laude's. Most are a sharp lot (minus some Harvard-bred politicians), but no smarter than you readers and your youth. Work on something more than a Harvard grad and you'll know more about it. Yes, some folks look down on others as the classless clueless, when actually the imaginers of class lack it and the judgers of cluelessness often misjudge, having missed many clues themselves. To be continued.

The Stubbs Name

Last week, I mentioned the English girl who told my brother that in England, Stubbs is ***NOT*** a high-class name. I continue my thoughts on the matter. Admittedly, the Stubbs name had humble beginnings in west England, in an area where many trees had been cut down. In those days, when the Norman French ruled England, so-and-so from the stumps was called so-and-so de Stumps (in French), which later became Stubbs. What is lowlier than a de-treed tree? Obviously, whoever named our clan after a stump cared nothing about our self-esteem. Many search for their roots, but finding that one's roots means roots is an adjustment.

Of course, everyone knows (except Europeans, evidently) that one surname says little about a person, because one surname is less than a millionth of one's ancestry. It is only one of 256 lines that we descend from eight generations back, only a thousandth of our ancestry from the tenth generation back, or a millionth of our ancestry 20 generations back. Yep, about AD 1300 we each have over a million slots on our pedigree chart. Now some of those are likely to be the same persons or family lines when getting back into European villages, etc. Everyone of European ancestry is more closely related than we realize, and everyone likely has in their ancestry both scoundrels and royalty. Or are those synonyms? Or are the two distinguished by class, not behavior.

I moved to a rural Rockies community, thinking I had no relatives here, then years after knowing the persons, I learned that Kathy Hurst (Winston) and Margie Hurst (William) are second cousins on my Dad's side, the Stubbs, and Barbara Lyman (Grant) is a second cousin on my Mom's side, from the Packers. One of my sisters lives in Cody, Wyoming. Her daughter married Aaron Lyman, also of Cody and a descendant of Amasa Lyman. So now I have both a niece and a cousin who are Lymans. When the groom's father came to the reception in Cody and found that half my sister's relatives were Stubbs, he mentioned that he has a Stubbs line too, besides his Lyman line. Lo and behold, the newlyweds were only a few cousins removed. I realize that every family in our small town has better stories than that, so I'm not competing, only offering reassurance or condolences that we are all more closely related than we realize. My first two sons-in-law grew up as friends. After marrying sisters, they learned that they were third or fourth cousins—both descended from Newell Knight. So most of my grandchildren are double cousins, to a degree. Yes, I know. I said I'm not competing.

Sometime in the late 1980s or early 90s, when I was stake mission president, I received a definite impression that I should go to Kayenta, AZ, which was in our stake at the time. So that Sunday I went to Kayenta, attended Church there, asked certain leaders how things were going and found that there was a major schism between the ward mission leader and some other leader(s) or missionaries (I don't remember who). A small group of us sat down after meetings and talked through it for some time and resolved the issue, restoring peace in the ranks of those involved in missionary work. I am not one continually showered with inspiration, so I relate this as one of the few that happened.

1993 autumn, Sheila was voted Homecoming Queen of SJHS. Early June 1993, I was called a 2nd time to be a counselor at the White Mesa Branch, this time to President Keith Langston. Shana was preparing for a mission. Not long before she left, she noticed and said something like, "What has gotten into Dad? He is so cheery and life-of-the-party-like lately." I did not realize that it was obvious, but I did have an internal realization that changed my outlook on life in a wonderful way. Let's see if I can be succinct. One day it dawned on me that at 44, I was likely more than half done with say, an 80-year life. "I can do this," I realized. Too many of the first 44 years seemed to me like life was an endurance test, and enduring is one thing I do reasonably well, as a distance runner, so endure I did. Somehow passing the midway point made me think: though certain times and dimensions of life can be endurance tests, in most ways and for the most part, **life is no endurance test; it's a party! And I am missing it.** There is so

much to enjoy, so many wonderful people to love, so many fun things to do, so many interesting things to learn, and so little life to fit them all in. Where did I get the idea that I should be enduring instead of enjoying? Suddenly little things did not matter (not that they ever did very much), but it did not matter if everything was not just as we think it all should be. Forget that and enjoy! Enjoy my kids, having a good and wonderful wife, living in a town full of friends and wonderful people, free to learn all that interests me and have time for, hiking what beautiful mountains I can fit into whatever years I can still walk. Before that realization, I often thought life was so long. But at 44, it dawned on me that it is short. It flies by so fast that I had best start enjoying it if I am going to fit into it a fraction of the potential enjoyments. How foolish of me to drag through dreary when all I had to do was take off the dark glasses and suddenly there was beauty all around—beautiful mountains all about, beautiful people all about, wonderfully interesting things all about to learn all about. Life is wonderful! Enjoy! If that was too succinct, a fuller version is the essay "Banning Boredom and Loving Life" in the book *Morsels for the Mind*.

Shana talked at the branch, played the piano for us a couple of times, and then she was off to serve in the Argentina Mendoza Mission. Sheila took over piano playing duties after Shana left. Sheila did it a year, then she graduated from high school and went to BYU. Then Jessica played piano for us a couple of years. So our service at White Mesa allowed three daughters to gain experience as branch organists.

After teaching at the college for a decade, in the fall of 1993 I began teaching college English for San Juan High students for dual credit. Every class was full of good wonderful young people, just like the good parents they come from. I never cease to be amazed at the exceptional quality of many people in Blanding. Blanding has one of the highest goodness-per-capita quotients in the world.

1994 March 12, Sheila and I hiked from Blanding to Montezuma Creek, a 35-mile straight line, more or less, or as a drunk crow flies. Sheila was the best 2A half-miler in the state. She took 2nd by one foot in the state meet. Another runner was gaining, but Sheila did not know it until too late the last second. She would have won had she known. She ran the half-mile in 2:27, the mile in 5:41, the 5K (3.1 miles) in 18:17, and graduated from high school 1994.

In May or June of 1994, I had a dream of Wick Miller, the authority in Uto-Aztecan, who did not like hearing about my Hebrew-UA comparisons. In the dream, he walked into my classroom as students worked. He knelt down beside me at my desk and whispered, "Brian, I want to work with you, and let's see how much Hebrew is in Uto-Aztecan." It was a very different attitude than the last time we talked. The way he said it came with a feeling that 'yes, there is some Hebrew in UA, but also more than Hebrew'. Some dreams are subconscious nonsense, while others are meaningful or from the other side. Yet I did not know which to think of that dream, until at that summer's UA conference, soon after the dream. At the UA conference, it was announced that Wick, on a bicycle, had been hit by a car while researching in Mexico and died May 9, 1994. So after he died, but before I knew that he had died, I had that dream about him, or from him. Soon into the other side, he learned that the Book of Mormon is true. Evidence that it was a dream from Wick or from Above in some way, is that in the years following I discovered a huge amount of Aramaic and also Egyptian, the two together being more numerous than the Hebrew-Phoenician items that I had found by that date. In fact, the Hebrew (Semitic-kw) often turned out to be more Phoenician-like, that is, its phonology aligned with Phoenician rather than Israeli Hebrew. Wick's hint that 'there's more to be found than just Hebrew' turned out to be exactly the case and proved prophetic. That was compelling. I like Wick. I think he is helping more than I know.

December 20, 1994, enroute from her mission, Shana and Silvia met Peter, Christian, and other cousins in Argentina.

By this point, I had been studying the Uto-Aztecan language family for 15 years. Elucidating the interconnected intricacies of a language family is complex, and my nature wanted to get everything figured out before publishing anything, present the whole solution without problematic loose ends. However, at age 45, I realized that my academic years were half gone, and that no one ever gets "everything" figured out. So I needed to start publishing what I *had* figured out. So in—

1995 I published "The Labial Labyrinth in Uto-Aztecan" in the *International Journal of American Linguistics* (61/4: 396-422). David Rood, editor of IJAL, wrote, "It's exciting to have North American historical work reach this level" (letter dated June 5, 1994).

Shana married Duane Brown in the Manti Temple—good, smart, hard-working, responsible.

July 26, 1995, Sheila and I hiked from La Sal Mountain to Monticello, cross country, 12 hours in 100-degree heat. Our water had run out, and David Laws and his father happened by and gave us some ice water that was sooo good that hot summer day. Whenever I see David Laws around town, gratitude wells within for the good man. Another year we walked 65 miles as a drunk crow flies (not quite a straight line) from Cortez to Blanding in 2 days. Sheila had a 4-year running scholarship to UVU, but went to BYU, where she worked out and traveled with the cross-country and track teams her freshman year.

Sometime during our time at White Mesa, a recently returned missionary named Orlo Ryan Knight came to speak at the branch. I remember being impressed with his talk, with how well-grounded and down-to-earth he was. Besides his words, his spirit impressed me most. Something about this fine, solidly grounded young man! Later I realized that he was the same young man that impressed me the night that some 20 of Joseph's classmates came to visit us a few days after the funeral. Silvia's attention was drawn to a tall young man, whom she later learned was Duane Brown, while my attention kept being drawn to the young man at the east end of the oblong circle, as they sat in a circle visiting us. He never spoke, just had a pleasant expression with an occasional smile as the others talked, but something about his spirit or inner essence or soundness of soul impressed me.

1996 Sheila married Orlo Ryan Knight in the Manti Temple, and our first grandson Hayden was born to Shana and Duane. Also in 1996, I published two articles in successive issues of *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, the second rebutted the Egyptologist Ed Ashment's criticism. Also had a semester sabbatical, so for one project, Mom, Dad, and I traveled to interview all of Mom's siblings in Utah and California so that I could write my Grandpa's life history, *Henry Harold Stokes: A Biography*.

Summer 1996, Sami and Lali, Silvia's sister's children came from Argentina to live with us nearly two years. Silvia and Shana got acquainted with them in Argentina when Silvia went to Argentina to pick up Shana after her mission. I stayed home with the other 3 children and worked while Silvia went. The two of them also went to Tucuman and found the graves of Silvia's grandparents and other relatives. In Buenos Aires they met some of Silvia's sisters and Shana's cousins. In later communications, Amelia asked about Sami and Lali coming to live with us awhile. Silvia agreed.

We were not well-to-do, but subject to meager finances at the time (and most of our lives); nevertheless, we purchased the plane tickets, they came, we bought school clothes, Sami started 8th grade, Lali 5th grade, Sarah 3rd grade, as Jessica continued high school. They were good kids generally. Six of us in the small house (before adding on) fit a tad tightly, but not like the pioneer stories of 12 in a two-room log cabin, so we tried enjoying our comparative comfort. Morning use of the one bathroom ranged from busy to chaotic to crisis management. I avoided the congestion by leaving for work early, keeping shaving cream and a razor at my office, and shaving in the college restroom before classes started.

It was a stressful time for Silvia, with more mouths to feed, kids' cultural adjustments, new languages among the 4 cousins, none of whom were bilingual yet, though most were later. The biggest stress was their mother. Though a darling 3-year-old little sister when Silvia escaped the house, Amelia grew up absorbing their arts of irrational accusation and dishonesty. She figured out how to reverse long-distance calls from Argentina to be put on our tab, which ran up a $1,000-phone bill two different times (a lot of money then), and later accused Silvia of stealing her children's hearts, though all Silvia did was take good care of them, like any aunt should and like Amelia had asked her to, and it was no picnic for Silvia.

During this time our living room could use more seating. I had noticed that Silvia's preference was often sitting on the floor while leaning against a couch. So I bought 3 beanbag chairs. That seemed the perfect solution. It would provide more seating, easily rearrangeable, and for Silvia it would be more

comfortable than sitting on the floor. I thought Silvia would be happy and pleasantly surprised when I and the children walked into the house, each carrying a new beanbag chair. But my guess was wrong again. Instead, she walked out and disappeared for a while, feeling claustrophobic at the new stuff filling the house fuller and needing a break from all of us.

Later the cousins' older sister, Gabriela, and her baby son Yago, also came to live with us. Gabriela was very helpful, a good pleasant person, and actually made the situation easier. However, her husband back in Argentina did not like his boy being so far away. At one point, Silvia felt prompted that all 4 of them should return to Argentina, so we bought 4 more tickets and they returned. Good thing, because two days later, the police came to our door to serve us papers accusing Gabriela and us of kidnapping the Argentine baby. Luckily, we could say that two days ago they flew back to Argentina.

Silvia's premonitions have been regular since youth. When she was a teen in Argentina, she had to go to work at a large department store before daylight in the big city of Buenos Aires, larger than LA in the USA. One morning, a man began following her. She walked faster, then he walked faster. She started running, then he started running. A woman in a car drove up and offered Silvia a ride, "Do you need help? Hop in." Silvia was given premonition not to enter that car. The man was a bit soused and stumbled, enabling Silvia to reach the lights of a guardhouse with a guard at a railroad crossing near her work. Safely in the light near the store, she looked back and saw the man get in the car with the lady who had offered the ride, then they drove off. They were working together, kidnapping girls for black market slavery. Milt Bissegger was CIA in Argentina at the time and wanted to catch them, so in his car, Milt followed Silvia to work many mornings, but no sign of them at those times. Listening to the spirit that day was a matter of life or death or worse.

1997 welcomed grandsons Justis and Malin. Jessica was the star of the powder-puff football game. As a junior, she ran for 2 or 3 touchdowns for the junior team, 70 yards end-around, because none of the seniors could catch her.

Friday, January 24: Stan Bronson called me about 8:30 or 9 pm to ask if I would go to White Mesa with him, as some had called requesting blessings, some due to evil spirits. We gave 18 blessings in all, returning home a little before 1 a.m. in the morning.

Sometime late in the 2nd millennium AD (1990s), rumor had it that I had all the town's license plate numbers memorized, which is an exaggeration, because I probably only knew 150 or so, not because I tried to memorize them, but I would simply notice them and they would stick. The plates I knew are the ones I saw regularly at places where I did life regularly—neighbors (near home), ward members (at church), and college employees (at work). Bishop Mark Lyman heard the story and one day in PEC meeting, he asked me what his license plate number was. I told him. Then they went around the room, and I knew the plates of the 6 or 8 people present.

At another Bishop Lyman PEC meeting, they were discussing the need for volunteers to wash the temple baptismal clothes. After some discussion, I was a tad puzzled and asked, "Aren't these the clothes that do life in clean water and get dunked in chlorinated water every 30 seconds? How much washing do they need when their whole life is spent being dunked in clean chlorinated water? Can't they simply be hung up to dry between uses?" As Bishop Lyman looked at me, I could see the wheels turning, trying to figure out how to answer that, since it was a decent point. He came up with the perfect answer, "You're thinking like a man." Too true! My thinking like a man—an affliction to womenkind all my life.

The year is lost to memory, but sometime toward the end of the previous millennium or early in the next—yes, either the 2nd or the 3rd millennium AD—how's that for pinning it down? I needed to exit during a SJHS basketball game. For years Mrs. Lynette Adams was supervising students taking tickets. I was about to pass the ticket table going out when Mrs. Adams jumped in front of me with arms spread wide. Well, in all my experience, when a person steps in front of me with arms spread wide, they want a hug. So with "Hi Mrs. Adams" I gave her a big hug. As she covered her now blushing face, unable to stop laughing, I realized she merely wanted me **NOT** to go out the "in" door. I backed up and went around,

adding one more misinterpreted social situation to my collection. My helpmeet, when we meet, helps me interpret social situations beyond my comprehension. But Silvia and others near her were watching from the stands and could not stop laughing. Nice Mrs. Adams still gives me a hug now and then. In fact, a nice thing about Blanding is all the wonderful people who give me hugs. Some stem from the 1,000 hugs trailing Joseph's funeral, as I hardly had a non-family hug before then, but I now enjoy a number of hugs from kind friends. I try not to be over exuberant, but being under exuberant was the down side of the first half of life, so if I give anyone a hug who did not want one, just give it back. No questions asked.

Also, either the 2nd or 3rd millennium AD, we obtained a new trampoline from across town, mile and a half away. We had no pickup for transporting it; and it was too big for a pickup anyway, unless it were disassembled and then reassembled, which would be a lot of work. So I figured that simply putting it centered on the roof of our little red car and driving slowly would work. And it did work. It attracted some surprised glances from those entertained by the sight, but it worked well in this small town. In a big city, I may have been pulled over if transporting it more miles.

1998 may have been the year that Jessica went back East to some national conference for high schoolers to learn something. The most interesting piece of info that I heard from her experience was an East Coast girl who saw no problem with abortion, referring to it as a little worm that you take out of your body, but who also thought that we westerners' killing groundhogs was **TERRIBLE**. I do not know about elsewhere, but here in Utah, groundhogs multiply like crazy and destroy thousands of dollars of crops every year, yet somehow they made someone's endangered species list. Groundhogs are about as endangered as rabbits, mosquitoes, and flies. Yet it appears that in many places the youth are brainwashed to think that controlling prolific destructive pests is horrible while killing unborn children is no big deal.

July 26, 1998, we attended as **President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicated the Monticello Temple**.

Autumn 1998, Jessica shined in the powder-puff football game again—this time as a senior. Again, she made 2 or 3 touchdowns on 70-yard end-around runs, because none of the juniors could catch her. At that point she could beat me, I was pretty sure. I knew I was slowing down (nearly 50), because when Joseph was 15 and myself 40, I could barely beat him by inches in 50 yards, for he was a 56-second quarter-miler. Four years later, when I was 4 years older and Sheila was running track, she and I were a dead heat, and Sheila, though fast, was not as fast as Joseph. Another 4 or 5 years later, when Jessica was running, I watched Jessica and Sheila race each other, and Jessica could barely edge past Sheila. So I knew better than to race any kids any more. This racing-against-kids stuff—everyone should outgrow such unproductive nonsense as soon as possible. Jessica was slightly faster, but Sheila had a little better endurance, yet they were both fast, so the quarter mile and the half mile were their best races, respectively. Sarah also ran cross country her senior year and I remember one race in which she was sick, really sick, the day of the race, yet she ran anyway, and did surprisingly well, in spite of being sick. I remember Shana was also fast all her growing up years, and had a lot of natural ability (see the Shana & Marilyn race 1989), but was kept very busy in concerts, rehearsals, band, and accompanying other groups as one of the best pianists in the high school. Obviously, I am proud of all my children, and running is a low priority compared to many other things, yet the facts that all five were good runners, play the piano, are sharp, beautiful, and all 4 daughters have been queen of something—and most important they are all such good people—how do I not rejoice in my posterity? A fitting insertion for the bro bri brag-a-thon.

But sprinkled among celebrations are frightful trials and pain. A week after powder puff, Jessica and other girls were in a rollover accident at 400 S. 200 W. in front of Arvid Black's house. Her lower leg was cut, no broken bones, but her hip and back hurt from the jarring. She was on crutches a while, but it all healed in time to be part of the state championship volleyball team.

After Jessica's, Sheila's, and Shana's rollover accidents, I was always worried when my kids were on the road. Someone suggested I was overly concerned, to which I said, "Each of my first four children has been in a rollover accident or is dead, and Sarah, the fifth, has not yet started driving" (though none of them were the drivers in those accidents).

When it comes to cars, I do not pay much. I paid $25 for my 1st car, $75 for the 2nd, and $75 for the 3rd, then $200, then $400 for the International pickup. Then 25 years later, when Lali, Sami, Gabriela and Yago lived with us, I paid $95 for a child's car seat—more than I paid for my first 3 cars. Yep, if anyone wants tips on how to do life in the fast lane, feel free to ask. (Answer: get off the freeway and enjoy walking a country road in the mountains!)

Sometime in the mid-90s, the San Juan School District began an annual Language Heritage day. Regular school was replaced by a variety of lectures that teachers could attend. The annual conference attracted or invited dignitaries and lecturers from elsewhere as well. Being the local linguist, an ESL English teacher, and familiar with the languages of the county (Navajo, Ute, Spanish, English), I was asked to be a presenter every year the first few years. Comments came back that those attending found my presentations very interesting. For example, one lecture was "The Subconscious Mind in Language Acquisition" explaining the challenges for 2nd language learners, to help teachers understand and be more patient (now in *Morsels for the Mind*). Then came a year in which I was presenting a paper on the linguistic and archaeological evidence relevant to the prehistory of the Navajo people and language, its Athapaskan roots from Alaska and Siberia before that, the entrance into the Southwest at the Dinetah area straddling the western New Mexico-Colorado border, and spread from there over most of the Ancient Puebloan areas, DNA evidence of considerable mixing with Southwest populations after arriving, and the Navajo's mysterious population explosion likely due to the absorption of Puebloan peoples as the Navajo expanded over their territories. This year, 4 or 5 professionally-dressed older Navajo women were in the audience, not seen before. All my presentations are Navajo-friendly, putting them in positive light, yet part way through my lecture the oldest of the ladies interrupted and asked if I had permission to research about the Navajo from the Navajo tribe's culture-language board or entity? The title I do not remember, but she was the head of that whatever. With that unexpected damper on the unveiling of interesting research, I was compelled to cut it short.

The surprise put me somewhat at a loss for words. I later thought I should have said, "No, I have not asked permission to research from any such abstract controller of intellectual freedom. I obtained my information from published books that are public domain and in libraries across the country, and anyone is free to read, research, and write up what they learn from those public sources!" But I did not think of it at the moment. The administrators of the conference were as surprised as I was, and it was the last time I presented at their annual conference, either late 90s or early 2000s. Year not remembered.

1999 ushered in two new grandchildren—Kia via Sheila and Packer packed by Shana. That spring Jessica was one of the state's best quarter-milers, won Sterling Scholar, and graduated from high school. Orlo built our house's addition (365 W. 100 S.), making it nice and big for us; that is, the addition that he and I built quadrupled the size of the house. (See picture at back.) The inclusion "I" means that he is the brains and the main worker, and I do what I can to help, about 1/3 what he does. He is a fast hard-worker, plus he knows what he is doing. I have to stop and think occasionally.

Journal entry in which I recorded student responses to an essay that would later appear in *Morsels for the Mind* and later again in *Anecdotes as Antidotes to Wrench Us from Our Ruts* (2017).

October 20, 1999: It is good to get positive feedback from students periodically, to know that one's efforts are making a positive difference in some of their lives. Today the students read "Banning Boredom and Loving Life" and wrote an evaluation or critique of it. Some of that day's responses:

¶ I love this essay. It changed my whole view of life.

¶ This is a great essay. It opened my eyes to my own attitudes.

¶ This essay answered many questions I had about life. It gave me a clearer view of things.

¶ This was a wonderful paper. ... I realized things I had never known before.

¶ I loved this article. It described me so well. If only I had read it awhile back, I would have known how to make things brighter for me. I know many people who could be helped by reading this essay.

¶ This essay has given me insight to overcome the drudgerous life. ... I learned so much from your essay. Thank you!
¶ I love this essay. It's so full of insights.
¶ This was a very interesting essay. I am glad I read it. ... I plan to use some of the ideas and change my outlook on life.
¶ I have read this essay twice now. I recommended my roommate to read it. It opened her eyes.
¶ Thanks for writing this essay. It seems to be aimed straight at me.
¶ I really enjoyed this article. I immediately thought "I need to read it again from time to time." It was a real motivator to improve my time and myself. The day I read this, a friend came to me in tears: she hated life, was depressed, and did not think things would ever get better. I had her read your article. She really liked it, and because it was not directed specifically at her, telling her what to do, it hit the spot for her to accept. She is a happier person today because of your paper; it gave her the perspectives she needed.
¶ This is a very inspiring and thought-provoking essay, and the last few paragraphs actually brought tears to my eyes. Like so many of your essays, it encourages the reader to consider the truly important and meaningful aspects of life: kindness, joy, caring, sharing, learning, knowledge, good health, family, friends, etc. One paragraph in particular (Admire people ...) I nearly smothered with little stars and asterisks. There is—sadly—a very large portion of humanity to whom these insights may never become available. Every suggestion for "banning boredom and loving life" is immensely valuable and sound advice—the difference between being truly alive, or stumbling through life in a sleep-walk.

2000 Sander came into the world. Because fall semester was in 1999 and spring semester was in 2000 that school year, I had some fun with it periodically: "We just covered that in the 2nd millennium AD" or "We haven't done a research paper since the 1900s." I published another major article in the *International Journal of American Linguistics* (66/1:125-37)—"More Palatable Reconstructions for Uto-Aztecan Palatals"—illuminating a few more insights into comparative UA not noticed before.

Also in 2000, I published *Morsels for the Mind*, first edition. First of all, the main purpose of a teacher is to teach, and as a teacher I felt responsible to teach students what would be of value to them in life. And there is not time to deliver "all that wisdom" in lectures, so I wrote several essays as teaching tools and sample research papers for discussion and for them to refer to while writing their own research papers. While reading whatever we might in the whole world, we may as well learn interesting things useful to life. So I did read hundreds of essays and from those, chose dozens for class readings besides writing some of my own. Many English teachers only teach English, a boring subject by itself, so I taught many other things more interesting and useful, if I could find readings on the topics, wrote one if not.

Secondly, most books on 'how to write a research paper' are about as interesting as a phone book. (as if our cell-phone kids know what a phone book is). After teaching from several other texts, I decided I could write one that would be more interesting, life-relevant, and with sufficient detail on writing and documentation in boring appendices to qualify as an English textbook. The students liked it much more. Many of their parents also read it and told me how much they enjoyed it. The erroneous rumor that research is boring spreads well enough without textbooks reinforcing the notion. A love for learning and discovering (i.e., researching) is as exciting as treasure hunting, but not as contagious, until the value of the finds is found. Researchers find interesting nuggets every day; treasure hunters can spend years and fortunes, then find nothing. I label *Morsels for the Mind* as 30% fun and entertaining, 60% interesting deeper thinking, and only 10% boring English book.

2001 I was asked to play the string bass in the musical "Forever Plaid". Enjoyed learning to play the bass through the three weeks of rehearsals, though I had never played bass before. I wore sunglasses to look a little beatnik-like. Bob Bowring asked Relva who the bass player was. It was his friend, Brian.

Saturday, Aug 4, 2001: Silvia and I went to Lagoon with our extending family. It was fun, for the kids, and we grandparents got through it. A moving experience in the afternoon had me choked up the rest

of the day. As I walked through the crowds at Lagoon, I saw a group of 3 high school girls, the black girl was sobbing openly. Two white girls, one on each side, were trying to console her. One gave her a hug in the 2 or 3 seconds that I witnessed this scene in passing. Through her tears, the one crying could barely get out the words: "I don't have any friends. No one wants to be with me; they all left me." I nearly started crying myself. As lots of people feel that way, all of us at times, yet those discriminated against would feel it more often. I felt like crying for her the rest of the day.

Sunday, Aug 5, 2001: We returned from Lagoon to Blanding about 3:30 in the afternoon. A storm came in, with lightning bolts striking several places in town. I was sitting in the family room, and closed my book to watch the fireworks and see whose yard was going to be struck next, to see who in town needed a wake-up call. Then **KABOOM!!!** A lightning bolt hit the large Chinese Elm in our back yard. A flash of bright fire, appearing to be about two inches thick, shone on both sides of the trunk, for about 2/10 of a second. Silvia and Jessica woke from their naps and came downstairs quickly. It was loud and scary, but because my attention was focused on seeing it rather than hearing it, it did not scare me as much as most nearby bolts usually do, but was a spectacular sight, and did renew my preference to do lightning storms indoors. Unbelievable power! I wondered if there was any meaning to my yard getting the bolt. I was being good, paying tithes, generally doing what I was supposed to, but it occurred to me that I was not appreciating God, contemplating Him, thanking Him enough, spending time enlarging my heart by pondering His—all of which is what keeping the Sabbath holy is. I was doing the motions, but not all the heart part.

After graduating from BYU, Jessica came back to Blanding, got a job, but did not have a lot happening in her life at the moment. I remembered Jessica in a SJHS play, in which she was hilarious and did so well—so well that I wanted her in one of my musicals that I had never written yet. The family did not know that the last 20 years, I had been thinking about writing a musical someday. I enjoy music, I enjoy composing, and it is fun to make people laugh. So writing a comedy musical combines all of those. With Jessica in town and not being overly busy, it seemed the time to do it. If I did not do it now, would I ever have enough umph to do it? So that summer I began writing *Life with Mr., Jr., and Some Misses of Communication*—a comedy about 2 neighboring families prone to humorous miscommunications.

In the script, a fortune cookie calendar had humorous sayings and helped the audience keep track of dates and time frame. The script had a boy-girl date at a football game in a context of a fall football season, and September 11th was a day in the script when funny things happened. Then terrorists struck the Twin Towers September 11th 2001. So 9-11 was no longer a day for humor. After some days in shock and sorrow with the rest of the nation, I revised the script's dates to avoid 9-11, and rehearsals began.

A good, fun cast. Song rehearsals went well—great group of voices—and scene rehearsals were progressing, though some were script-toters to the end. The dress rehearsal was scary. To think that the next time would be in front of people made me feel ill. Some of our cast were seasoned actors, but I was not. Making a fool of myself doing what someone else wrote is one thing, but being the one responsible for the whole thing—having written it and making it happen—was terrifying. The huge question in my mind through all the rehearsals was "Will people like it?" But the cast liked it and anyone who read the script was laughing through it. So its probabilities seemed good, but I was very nervous. Distraught may be a better word. I prayed many times the 24 hours between the disastrous dress rehearsal and opening night. I kept thinking that if it bombed, I could always quit my job and move to another state. But—

The curtains opened, and minus a glitch or two, the whole thing went well. As it unfolded, mostly as planned, I relaxed and we had a great time. In the script, I marked 307 places of potential for laughter, and my concern about audience response had me so alert that I remembered exactly the audience response to each one. Afterwards I went through the script and tallied responses, and 300 of the spots had elicited varying degrees of laughter. I was so grateful to The Director Above for His blessings upon the cast's alertness for lines and ingenuity for adjustments to unforeseens. In fact, I was choked up with gratitude unto Him for some hours afterward, and Silvia later said she sensed a most reverent gratitude in me. The many positive comments in the weeks afterwards were a relief.

We had a great cast! Worthy Glover was a superb grampa! My wonderful stage family of Dianne Carroll, Jessica, Alden Jack, Nancy Bayles. Tyler Jack was Jasper the cowboy; Linda and Laura Wright, and Kevin Francom were the neighbor family. Cara Hunt, Kristi Johnson, Jason Slade, and John Fahey were friends. Ruth Kimmerle played piano and prelude piano duets with Alden. See picture at back.

2002 brought Aisha into the world. A few successive summers early in the 3rd millennium AD, Mike Moses asked me to do an Institute class on evidences of the Book of Mormon. I enjoyed that. Half were former students to whom I could not discuss such things in a state institution English class.

May 17-18, 2002: Jessica and I enjoyed a two-day hike with the Carroll family and some of their children's friends—down Owl Canyon and back up Fish Creek the next day. We got a tad scattered in the final approach to the vehicles without a clear trail. The main group was farther back, helping a friend who got sick. Others were in front, assuming they were going the right direction. I hurried ahead hoping to help frontrunners arrive aright, and I crossed paths with Stefani, redirected her the right direction, and we two found the vehicles first, but it was a long time before anyone else came. All eventually arrived safely at the vehicles. I did not drink much the two days to make sure Jessica and others had enough water. Being curious, I weighed myself at home before drinking water (had lost 15 lbs of water), then rehydrated a few hours, weighed again (got the 15 lbs back), then ate a good dinner that night and weighed 25 lbs more at the end of the day than at the end of the hike earlier that day, but the next morning was back to my usual (rehydrated) 200. Similarly, a few Thanksgivings, I weighed myself before dinner (200), at bedtime after dinner and piecing leftovers (210), after a rest in the room next morning (200), then I would do a 15-mile hike-run in the La Sals and weigh 193 at noon with sweat loss, for a 17-lb difference in 24 hours, and then rehydrate (200). But the 25-pound difference on the Carroll hike (200 to 185 to 210 to 200) was the largest weight-swing—but not recommended for general audiences.

Perhaps 2002, give or take a year, Monticello community performed *The Music Man*. I played cello in the orchestra. *The Music Man* is a classic, one of my favorites along with *The Sound of Music* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Monticello did an excellent job, yet I noticed the number of times that the audience laughed at a humorous line were 8 or 10, and maybe a few other giggles, while during my first musical, the audience laughed 300 times. Now, I do not claim that my musical is better, but it certainly seemed more entertaining. Whether a literary masterpiece or not, it could compare with any in humor.

The only downside to success is its encouragement, and so after the fun and feedback from my first musical, I wrote another one the next year. This second musical had a different look to it than the two-family sitcom. *Paradise Lost or Found* had a cast of mainly 9: a captain (Jake Joslin), a crew boy (Ed Larson) and 7 crazies on a rickety cruise ship who do their inevitable shipwreck on an island where some want to be rescued while others do not want to be rescued, figuring that "paradise is finally found!" Their futile attempts at shark-fishing, substantive thought, coconut-picking, and romantic realizations provide more comedy than results … until the native cannibals appear, at which point their inability to do anything right is once again reconfirmed. As my old high-school buddy, Neil Joslin was a great stage presence. April, May, June, Julie, and Autumn were played by Nancy Bayles, Megan Larson, Itsy Hawkins, Stefani Carroll, Sarah Fahey, Patricia Hurst, and Ninette Palmer. I played the dense dunce Noland. Craig Halls, Nicole Pettitt and others appear as the cannibals in the last scene.

We lost our original accompanist, and someone suggested Kelli Christensen, 13, who played piano as well as any adult in town, and did so for us. I am forever grateful to all who were in my musicals and helped enjoy the loosely organized pandemonium. But such productions are a lot of work, and as one continually re-evaluates if the work is worth the result, one may eventually come to a point where it becomes more tiring than fun. But evidently, I was not there yet, because in—

2003 wrote *Paradise Lost or Found: part II*, the sequel. Some wondered if I tossed research out the window. No, writing a musical, rehearsing it, and doing it is a 3 or 4-month effort, and only a brief rest from 30 years of language research and from the other 8 months of the research year. In other words,

as much work as writing and doing a musical is, it is only a drop in the bucket compared to dealing with 50 languages in comparative research. Sarah was in this one as a stowaway, and we all played director.

I also enjoyed contributing an occasional newspaper column to Neil and Becky Joslin's *Blue Mountain Panorama* newspaper. Preferring not to be regularly obligated, I sent one when something came to mind, and the Joslins were good to work with my irregular inspirations. For example—

Community Theater

I recently realized a new definition of courage: community theater. Being on stage, blinded by lights, without a cue or clue of one's lines, is such an adrenalin rush! High risk adventure, yet perfectly safe, physically. One's dignity is at risk, but who can manage maintaining much of that through life? But among community, it all happens in a friendly atmosphere of regularly shattered comfort zones. My family was flabbergasted when I wrote my first musical. All they had ever seen me do was work, yard work, correct papers, and research, without saying much. They had to do most of the talking if any happened. Then came a time when Jessica (who had done well in drama) did not have a lot happening, so I decided it was time. I wrote one with her in mind and eventually 5 more. This pastime of writing musicals has prompted many questions. We address only those asked by others (not those I ask myself).
Q: Is the enjoyment for the audience worth the work? **A:** Maybe not, but we can pretend. That is what theater people do, you know.
Q: When do you find time to write them? **A:** O there is no time to write them. I often think up plots, lines, lyrics, and music while doing something else that I have to do anyway—while walking, running, weeding, driving, and sitting in meetings—then I jot down the ideas between meetings.
Q: Do you do them for the money? **A:** (I try not to fall to the ground with laughter as I say) I have come within $200 of breaking even. It is a community service.
Q: So why do you do them? What brought you to this? **A:** I started out as a shy quiet kid the first 45 years of life, so even my family is miffed as to what came over me. Years of being a college instructor first encouraged me to try to talk more than others in the room, which I am now able to do on good days. And when I really get wound up, I could be mistaken for an animated lecturer. After overcoming my shyness in a mere 45 years, I decided we need to have more fun in our drab, duty-filled lives; and few things are more enjoyable than laughing at something funny and listening to entertaining music.

So the real reason I do them is to have fun and make people happy. Doing duties may contribute to happiness, but those long-term connections need some help along the way: home teaching and handing out homework assignments evoke so few squeals of delight. But musicals scatter squeals of delight all over the auditorium—or at least I assume the events on stage were the sources of them. Many people are depressed. Then we stare at a future packed with drudgerous duties and it is enough to make anyone depressed who is not already. So it does not hurt to lighten up a little, laugh more, enjoy some fun music, and figure out how to make life a little more fun sometimes. Rehearsing for a comedy is fun for the cast, and watching it is fun for the audience—a win-win financial loss.
Q: Isn't it a lot of work? **A:** You have no idea—enough to question my sanity every time I do one, but that was in question long before I started writing musicals.
Q: What do these musicals do you for? **A:** Community theater has changed my life: the image of a self-respecting college professor is gone forever; and previous illusions of self-esteem are hardly recoverable. But it is enjoyable working with wonderful people in doing something fun.
Q: Would you recommend community theater for others? **A:** Certainly! If your life is the usual humdrum dullsville, and you want a thrilling adrenalin rush to wrench you from your ruts, do community theatre! Afterwards, most families will still claim you … given some time. Mine has … most of them.

In 2003 Jessica received her call to serve in the Argentina, Buenos Aires North Mission. The September morning that we were to drive her up to the MTC in Provo, our car was stolen. Of all the cars in front of my house, it's just my luck that they would take the one that runs. The first 25 years we lived

in Blanding, like many Blanding people, we never locked house or cars and left the keys in the ignition. Blanding was simply that kind of town, a place where everyone was decent and trustworthy. None of my cars cost much, so for years I figured if anyone stole my car, he got what he deserved. But a few decades into life, my wife and family thought we were established enough to buy a "nice" car. So we did. We paid $3,000 for a 3-year-old "nice" car. I always paid cash, never went in debt for a car.

But then drugs began changing some personalities and priorities, and people started having to lock their houses and cars. So we also started taking the keys out of the ignition at night. We did this fairly consistently, but forgot to do so the night before we were to take Jessica. That next morning our car was nowhere to be found. So once again I called my good friend and policeman Mike to report the missing vehicle. He immediately offered that we take one of his cars to take Jessica to the MTC. What a good kind man is Mike Halliday! We took Jessica to begin her year and a half.

When we returned from Provo, Mike informed us that our car had been found, but it was burned and totaled. Three young men "borrowed" it, drove to Monticello on a beer run, decided to drive it on obscure dirt roads coming back, got stuck, decided to burn the evidence, but forgot that metal does not burn completely, and were found out. I heard that one or two tried to talk the other one or two out of such a dumb idea, but once underway, backing out is eliminated as an option. Lesson 14: Do not let peers pressure you into stupid.

Again, the goodness of Blanding people overflowed, and without our knowing beforehand, Bishop Wilcox handed us a collection of $3,000 in donations a couple of weeks later (lesson 13: people are good, so do good). We added another $2,000 of our own and bought another car.

2003 was also the year that I published two rather significant articles. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was putting together a volume on the Uto-Aztecan (UA) language family, so it was an honor that the other Uto-Aztecanists had recommended me to write the lead article to introduce the language family with a historical linguistic overview of it. At the annual UA conference, Jane Hill once said that I was the only one who consistently presented a historical linguistics paper on UA each year. Others dealt with a grammatical dimension of one language or such, much easier than dealing with all 30.

Also in 2003, some BYU scholars asked me to fill out some briefly stated thoughts, so I wrote "Elusive Israel and the Numerical Dynamics of Population Mixing" which appeared in two journals.

After writing several articles, I decided that articles were a haphazard, strewn-across-the-world way of scattering one's ideas to the four winds with hopes that subsequent scholars would have the patience to gather them together for a cohesive picture of one's views—too optimistic and not likely. So I slowed down on doing articles and intensified my efforts to finish the comparative Uto-Aztecan book.

2004 we performed *Mr. Scrumple's Opus*, somewhat a spoof on the movie Mr. Holland's Opus, wherein a teacher makes a wonderful difference in students' lives. In contrast, Mr. Scrumple (me) is a beleaguered English teacher, apparently doing no one any good, but is only bombarded with excuses and humorous happenings. In contrast, Shane Brewer, the math teacher, has it all together. They occasionally spew profound insights relative to education and their respective spheres of humanities and math/science. In real life, I am a math-physics fellow turned linguist, who then slipped into teaching English. So professionally I am a math-science mind surrounded by humanities minds (at both local and state levels). So in the script I have some fun with the occasional gulf between humanities vs. math/science. A great cast again: Liesl Jack (2 parts), Shane Brewer, Kerry Bayles, Alyson Christensen, Kelli Christensen, Stefani Carroll, Sarah Stubbs, Cindy Perkins, Heather Hart, Eileen Mellor, Mary Pugh, Jordan Grover, Mike Johnson, Debbie Laws, Janelle Jack, Eric Moses, Greg Moses, Ninette Palmer, and others.

2004 Shana, in Boise, Idaho, mentioned to Silvia the daily challenge of raising 3 active little boys. Any mom understands. So Silvia prayed that Joseph go help Shana now and then to give her an easier day once in a while. One night Shana was reading to 2-year-old Aisha when Aisha said, "Dofus." That was Joseph's nickname—how the young neighbor kids used to pronounce Joseph. Aisha was barely talking and had not been told about Joseph. Aisha was looking up and seeing something, so Shana asked who she

was talking to. “Dofus,” Aisha answered. Shana asked, “Where is he?” “In the sky,” Aisha said. After Sarah’s and Aisha’s experiences at 2 and other incidences at Silvia’s daycare, I am guessing that children 2 and under are more gifted at glimpses of the finer side from which they recently came.

Also in 2004, I produced a 100-page draft monograph on the Egyptian and Two Dialects of Semitic in Uto-Aztecan. John Sorenson sent a copy to David H. Kelley, Harvard PhD, an internationally renowned scholar who contributed to the Mayan decipherment and was familiar with Uto-Aztecan. David Kelley called me and raved about the strength of the case for 15 minutes. Among other things, he said, “This big thick thing came in the mail, and I did not want to read it, but decided to dutifully open it and look at a page or two, yet the more I read, the more interested I became, until I had read the whole thing. It’s the most interesting and significant piece of research I’ve seen in years.”

Silvia’s generosity, mentioned earlier, continued. From her salary, she helped several missionaries in succession through the years. When one came home, another would start shortly.

For another instance, picture this one. A renter was behind on rent, so I went to try to collect. I came back and related to Silvia their difficulties: He was out of work and was immobilized with a bad back, so I agreed to let it go another month. She said that I’m just too soft, that I need to get tough with the renters, because we cannot afford to make the house payments if they do not pay rent. I told her she can go try to collect if she liked, but that I had done what I judged best for the circumstances and I did not feel like being any meaner. So she left to do so. She returned after a while, said nothing, and began cooking dinner. After 10-minutes of her not volunteering information, I asked her how it went. She said, “It’s worse than you said. They don’t have any food either. So I’m cooking them dinner.” Now that is how you get tough with renters! Free rent and meals too!

She once asked me, “So what would Jesus do when renters don’t pay?” I answered, “He would know better than to have rentals. He may have seldom enjoyed his own house, as he said, “the foxes have holes, and the birds have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20), usually out and about, doing His work, sleeping on the ground, seldom home.

Silvia also did a lot of taking care of extra kids: Lily a year or two, Daniela, an exchange student from San Luis Potosi, Mexico, a year, and Sami and Lali two years, and Gabriela and Yago, a year. Daniela was a good girl, about Sarah’s age. They were both in high school. That year, a small circus came to town, so we all went and watched the circus. They had jugglers, a gymnast or two, but no big animals like elephants or tigers. After the circus, we walked to the car and I said to Sarah and Daniela, “Well girls, that juggling and many of those tricks we could do those too, if we practice. Maybe we should start practicing and make our own circus?” An expression of dread and wide eyes came over Daniela’s face. She comes from a well-to-do, upper-class family, and being circus performers was not cool in her circles. I told her that I was kidding. She was relieved. How do you spell relief? N-O!

Sami and Lali and Gabriela were good kids too, and Gabriela was very helpful. We have already mentioned them, and that Amelia was the difficult one, accusing Silvia of stealing her kids’ hearts after she asked us to take them, and heaping on Silvia other irrational nonsense, all such being many of the reasons that Silvia left home. Yet the kids themselves were decent, though unavoidably a lot of extra work for Silvia. Nevertheless, while they were here, I thought I’d give Sami some country experience, a day of working on the farm. I volunteered us to move rocks from Don Brown’s field 4 miles away. Walking is also good country experience, so we did not take the car, but walked. About halfway there, near the Palmer spread, we had walked 2 miles and all Sami could see were fields clear to the Colorado mountains. He asked, “Tio, donde está? (Uncle, where is it?)”

“Está allá (it’s over there),” I said, pointing to the southeast. He could see a few distant houses, but was not comforted. After we picked up rocks a couple of hours, Sami asked me, “Tio, te gusta esta clase de trabajo? (Uncle, do you like this kind of work?)”

I said, “Sí, me gusta, por cambio de estar sentado todo el dia (Yes, I like it as a change from sitting at a desk all day).” We picked up another rock or two, then I asked him if he liked the work.

He said, "Me gusta silla suave (I like a soft chair)." It might be the only day he worked on a farm, so it was a worthwhile day.

Another collection of Silvia's experiences happened mostly while she was Relief Society President, perhaps some outside that timeframe. She would get an impression to go visit someone, and when she arrived, it would be apparent why. One time a lonely lady struggling with some circumstance said that she had been praying all day for a visit from someone. One month, 3 different sisters spoke of Silvia coming to visit them when each needed someone to talk to. Some RS officers would get frustrated with the loose spontaneous style, preferring that all things be tidied up and done and forgotten about, but that was not Silvia's style. The Lord's work was never "done" in her mind nor in the Lord's apparently.

2005 in the spring, Jessica returned from her mission, and Siah was born on Mom's birthday (her great grandmother). Also in 2005 Shana and Duane moved from Boise to Blanding. Working at CEU, Duane installed all the computer and distance ed technology systems into the Health Science Library Building under construction. They stayed with us while they considered housing options. Being scrunched into small bedrooms and being a mom in charge of the kids but not in charge of the house in which one is in charge of the kids turns chaos into a spectator sport. So Shana sometimes compared the number of days in our house to the Jaredites' living in their barges 344 days (Ether 6:11)—but a fairly nice barge, no seasickness, and freedom to walk out for fresh air and shopping whenever. They later bought and remodeled a house, but then a computer engineer job in Phoenix became available. It paid three times as much as Duane made at the college, so the move to Phoenix was a no-brainer. When Duane arrived at his new job in Phoenix, the other computer engineers had been trying unsuccessfully for two months to program a main computer to do something. They explained the problem to Duane. That night Duane worked through the equations, and the next day he had the computer programmed and doing that by noon.

In June 2005, the annual Summer Experience river trip was in the highest, fastest, most dangerous water that had been in a decade or two. Torri Madden was on my raft, and at one steep docking stop, too deep to touch ground, Torri was holding on to the upriver side of the raft, but the current was so fast and strong that it began pulling her under the raft. Going under one raft is one thing, but 3 rafts in a row and then thick tree branches out into the river 20 feet was a serious drowning risk. As she began to go under, I grabbed her under both arms, but as massive volumes of water rushed under the raft, the current's pull on her was so strong that I could barely hold her head above water, but as we drifted out and turned 90-degrees, the water's force on her was less, and I was able to pull her up into the boat. It *was* scary, and the more I thought about it, the more scared I got. And if the prevailing opinion was that I had saved a beautiful young lady's life, should I be stupid and argue otherwise? Or is that being humble? Either way, I try to avoid being stupid (with great effort), and humility I can avoid effortlessly, so let the story stand, as is, because getting caught in branches underwater is the cause of many river drownings.

July 4th, 2005 was devoted to the city's centennial celebration, 100 years since Albert R. Lyman settled Blanding in 1905, after his uncle Walter C. Lyman had seen it in vision. Blanding City asked me to write a pageant-like production of the settling of San Juan County. Of course, it was a musical. Besides large audiences, the cast was huge too. Instead of 10 or 15, as in my other musicals, close to 100 participants were in this production, not because I wanted it that big, but because many people were involved in the history. The size of the cast made it so that we never had everyone present—not in one rehearsal and not in one performance. Continual adjustment was our lot. Yet it was exciting and inspiring, because the people and events depicted were inspiring. I asked descendants to play the parts of their ancestors: a grandson Kumen Jones played Kumen Jones, Aldean and Wanda Ketchum played their 13th-century Native American ancestors, Joe B. Lyman played his ancestor Walter C. Lyman, etc. As usual, the dress rehearsal had everyone scared, but performances went well each night.

The title was *Great! Expectations!* A play on words of Charles Dickens' famous novel, of course, but with different punctuation and thus a different meaning: That's just great! You and your expectations! So I too should be weighed down by your unreasonable expectations? How about we get the work done?

You have expectations that keep you from being happy and realizing your blessings. Shed the burdening expectations, relax, do your part and be grateful others do theirs. Yes, punctuation is important.

Joe B. Lyman (later mayor of Blanding) commented that, as he sat listening to a group of people talk about it the next day, he heard only wonderful comments, about the music, the script, etc. Even my Dad, the music theory professor, was impressed with my music. When I got home after the last performance, he said he had read the script beforehand and thought to himself, "such an excellent script, but Brian should get someone else to write the music for his musicals." But after hearing it, he changed his mind and thought the music was impressive too.

July 2005, Packer and I did a drive to AZ that made it into the collection of newspaper columns:

Learning Styles

A common pastime among educators is to discourse on various learning styles—visual, verbal, aural, physical, logical, occasional—I made up the last one. After some in-service training on left-brain vs. right-brain learners, our science teacher, Don Smith, said, "Using either half would be a half more than some students are using now." I think he was saying, "Let's start with coming to class and doing some homework." Judging from experience, one of my learning styles is "learning the hard way." No need to elaborate on the particulars of each piece of evidence for such, but one episode should suffice.

Silvia was already in Mesa's metropolis visiting kids and grandkids, and I was scheduled to drive our grandson Packer and me to the sizzling expanse a day or two later. Packer was six years old at the time, and I was instructed to drive him down in the car with air-conditioning. After all, it was July and we all know that the boiling basin can hit 115 to 120 degrees that time of year. I cannot remember why I did not want to take the car with AC. (Not remembering is another feature of my learning style.) So we took the car with no AC. I knew we would be okay … in contrast to other opinions. I had a plan. We left Blanding without telling Packer's Grandmother which car we were taking so as not to worry her. We would simply arrive alive and all would be well. From Blanding to Flagstaff was not too bad, no more than the usual 90s of those elevations, for which the old-fashioned windows-down-at-65 worked well enough. As we began the descent from Flagstaff down into Volatile Valley, we could feel the warmth waxing stronger. Halfway down the descent, I pulled into a station, bought gas and a bag of ice (my plan), figuring it would last from there to Sheila's house. Actually, the plan worked fine, though the details are a tad entertaining. Packer was seated in back, and I set the big bag of ice upright on his lap and told him to hug it the rest of the way to Aunt Sheila's house. It worked. Though we later learned it was 114 degrees, he did not get too hot. He got wet, but not real hot. As the ice melted and leaked through the holes of the plastic bag, it cooled us both. You see, once in a while I would take the bag from him, put it on my head, and let the melting ice drip down on me too for a few seconds, then I would hand the bag back to him. It was a good plan, maybe not recommended in the etiquette books, but it worked fine … or well enough that Packer later asked, "Grampa, why am I supposed to hold this bag of ice on my lap?"

"To keep you cool," I answered. I learned something else that trip. In 114 degrees, windows-down-at-70 mph is like a blast-furnace. It makes the heat much hotter—hotter than standing in 114 degrees. Yet rolling the windows up was like enclosing us in an oven, and that was also hotter than 114 degrees. However, I found that rolling the windows down just two inches shielded us from the blast-furnace effect yet also allowed the air to swirl around rapidly for some coolish effect and it evaporated our wet clothes to cool us off even better. About 20 minutes before destination, Packer fell asleep. I glanced back at him now and then, and was reasonably sure that he was only asleep and not passed out from heat-stroke. Sometime along the way, Silvia found out that we were coming in the non-AC car, so when we pulled up to the house, all were watching for us, to see if we emerged alive. As soon as I stopped the car, Packer woke up, saw his cousins' house, got excited, hurried to open the door and jump out, but in his excitement, he tripped and fell on the ground. My wife thought he fell out dead, but he immediately jumped up, ran in the house, and started having fun with his cousins, seemingly oblivious of the heat. My

predicament shifted from one kind of heat to another, but we survived both. So if you need a redneck AC system, it is inexpensive, easy to install, no moving parts, no guarantees, etc.

One other thing I have learned is to crack one's windows periodically regardless of temperature. How often have you passed a dead skunk on the road, even when all the windows are rolled up, and the stench still immediately filters into what most people assume is a tightly closed car frame? That means that it is not at all air tight. Or when one passes a smoke column from a large fire, the smoke or odor seeps in immediately, which is proof that our cars are about as air-tight as jail bars. Skunk stench and smoke do not worry me, but the amounts of carbon monoxide put out by the dozens of cars ahead of me on a freeway are scary. Carbon monoxide is heavier than air, so it settles toward the ground to be sucked in just like skunk odor, yet carbon monoxide is odorless, so we cannot smell it, though there would have to be a lot of it swirling about, a lot more than any skunk ever put out, maybe equal to a skunk every 30 feet along the road. Nevertheless, since we cannot smell the poisonous gas, we are not aware, but cracking windows for a little fresher air from higher off the ground now and then doesn't hurt. I hear that even in small amounts carbon monoxide kills brain cells. Of course, we whose learning style is 'learning the hard way' may not need all that many brain cells anyway, but I would like to keep what few I might have left.

In 2005 I started study-hiking. I hated sitting, yet I had a desk job, which only added to my dislike for the sedentary nature of too many dimensions of life. True, I have been running all my life, but an hour run per day couched among 12 hours of sitting is like taking a vitamin pill to offset 3 meals of ice cream each day. So I figured out a solution. Much of what I have to do—correct papers, work on drafts of articles, musicals, and books underway—can be done while walking. And much of what I like to do can also be done while walking—read books, learn, study languages, read scriptures (Old Testament in Hebrew, New Testament in Syriac/Aramaic, or one of several Nahuatl dialects, Book of Mormon in Arabic, Spanish, German, or Quechua). And I love walking in the mountains and can do all those kinds of work while walking, and look up every now and then to relax, breathe in the delicious mountain air, and take in the beautiful scenery. Furthermore, it doubles as exercise. When young, I did not think walking counted as exercise—only running. But now (that I am older) I find that walking 10 or 15 miles over 4 or 6 hours, is indeed exercise. So study-hiking in the mountains became my favorite pastime and is a very efficient use of time. On a 3-hour study-hike in the mountains, reading Hebrew Old Testament, Aramaic NT, Arabic Book of Mormon or other, I can get 3 hours of exercise, 3 hours of scripture reading, and 3 hours of language review—9 hours of accomplishment all combined into the same 3 hours. Others sit at a desk to read or research (if they do at all), take separate time to exercise (if they do at all), and separate time to read scriptures while sitting (if they do at all). But study-hiking combines them to get more done per hour and more done in a lifetime. I still sit at a computer to input changes marked on rough drafts and write up the research figured out while walking, but study-hiking turns half the sitting time into walking time. A wonderful way to do life. When I started study-hiking (age 56, 2005), the early years I would walk from my house to Dry Wash and back, about 24 miles. Later I drove to the mountains to do all the walking in beauty and avoid in-town miles. In my early 60s, the round-trip from Johnson Creek to Skyline saddle and back was usual (14-15 miles), by late 60s, Camp Jackson sufficed (9-10), and by early 70s, distances decreased to 5 or 6, until 2023 when the year-long illness hit and shortened my usual to 2, 3, or 5. I also wrote a column on that newly invented pastime:

When I Grow Up—and It Could Happen Any Time

I finally decided what I want to be when I grow up. When will I grow up, you ask? We'll call it done at the undertaking where speakers undertake to say nice things about me (hopefully). Until then, I want to be a mountain man. No, not like the buckskin-clad outdoorsmen skilled in muzzle-loader and traps, but like … well … me. Disappointing perhaps, but I love being in the mountains. Besides, what is a mountain man? Or does anyone really care? If not, I qualify … and might anyway. I have lived in the

Rocky Mountains since age 13 and have walked or run in the Rockies a total distance of 4 times around the earth. Thirty-five miles used to be a day's walk; now twenty is plenty. My wife prefers that I maintain some semblance of loose ties with civilization, so I do middle-class yuppy as well as mountains—trying to stay versatile, you know. I grew up in Honolulu and Los Angeles, so I am acquainted with big-city life too—part of why I prefer the rural Rockies.

Do I trap beaver? Of course not! Even the yester-year yahoos raced through those resources so fast that they had to become guides, traders, or whatever else after a brief flurry through the furry. I merely started with the whatever else, doing other jobs seasonally and on the side (as most 19th-century mountain men had to do too) to get by until I could get back to the mountains, where I feel more at home. I have done garbage collector, janitor, composer, writer, linguist, and teach college to pay the bills, but those have all been temporary subsistence patterns to hold me over until I can get back to the mountains, though teaching has annually taken a frightful chunk (9-months) out of each year for two and half decades. Even the yester-year mountain meanderers left the mountains for the winter and came into town (Taos) from time to time. I just happen to have to stay longer.

The dangers that the yester-year mountain men met were grizzly bears, bullets, arrows, and nature. Black bears are not so dangerous, but grizzlies—they were the only animal that the Native Americans feared and for good reason. How many arrows did it take to kill a grizzly? Did anyone sticking around to count live to tell about it? So I stay south of grizzly country. Black bears I am not so afraid of ... unless they do not run away from me. Then I suspect I would become dreadfully alert, but so far they have done the running away so that I do not have to. Of course, one does not run from a black bear, but stand and fight. Like most things in life, easier said than done.

So am I fearless? Nope. Am I a coward? Yep. A common-sense coward, like most people are or should be. Courage is submitting to calculated risks for good reason, but clumsily clambering into needless uncalculated risks for no good reason is stupidity. Weighing the reasons and doing the calculations will vary per person, but hopefully we get better at it with time, which is why we get more cautious with age. So I carry pepper spray and a knife in case a bear or cougar figures out that I am slower, fatter, and juicier than any deer; otherwise, the hand-to-claw combat would be pathetically unfair. However, men have always been the greater danger. Of mean men, the Old West had plenty, every race contributing some, but today the mean men are mainly in the cities. Of course, there are good people in cities too, mixed with the mean, but having grown up in big cities, I feel safer in the mountains with the black bears.

Whether the mid-30s life-expectancy of the old-time mountain men was due to men being more mean or due to different cultural approaches to conflict resolution is hard to say, but today is a much better time to be a mountain man. It lengthens life instead of shortening it. One cannot earn much at it anymore, but it is a most pleasant life-style with health benefits galore. Yet I do earn a little in the mountains (writing, researching), in case one insists that earning be part of the job description. So when you see me walking the mountains with a shoulder bag of books and rough drafts, I'm working. Honest! Just because it is in beautiful scenery, in delicious fresh air, and is healthful relaxing mild exercise does not mean that I am not working. And it costs next to nothing, an occasional pair of shoes! Consider the savings of a day in the mountains, drinking from mountain streams and eating greens, vs. a day at the mall handing over greens. And the mountain's greens are as good and nutritious as a grocer's greens (if you care for either). Like a line from my musical *Paradise Lost or Found*: "With inflation and the stock market's swings up and down, my best hope for a retirement plan may be a good book on edible plants." So I'm practicing.

Also like the old-time mountain meanderers, I have learned a little of some Native American languages. Instead of hunting beaver, I hunt new discoveries. Instead of exploring the West, I read and explore languages' pasts while walking the West. So with only a little exaggeration, maybe I am as much a man of the mountains as this day and age allow, albeit a self-styled one—but weren't they all? Yes,

walking the mountains is so much more beautiful, peaceful, and pleasant than the hustle, bustle, and guzzle of civilization.

A Novel? Perhaps a Novel Novel

I was granted two one-semester sabbaticals during my 32 years at CEU. Such a privilege it is to be given a semester off to research! The first was in 1996. One of the projects was to write a life history of my deceased grandfather, Henry Stokes. I could not interview him, so I interviewed his children. I drove to each of their homes (in CA, UT, and ID), took notes as they talked, and from their information, wrote a life history for him, later distributed to his descendants. My mother is one of the 7, so my parents were happy to come along and each stop was like a mini-reunion, mixing business with visiting. A few long enjoyable trips, then the writing. I also intermixed research in Uto-Aztecan (UA), as always.

In 2005 or 2006, a second sabbatical was tentatively approved, but the committee asked what the project would be. As a linguist and leader in comparative UA linguistics, I proposed that I continue research in UA and possibly bring the large reference work to completion that I had been working on since the previous millennium (1980s). However, the powers that be at our "mother" campus, shall we call it, or main campus in Price, questioned whether linguistic research was appropriate for an English faculty's sabbatical. Rather than risk possible unpleasantries by arguing my case, I said, "How about if I first write a novel and then use the rest of the sabbatical researching UA?" They agreed to that. Why the world would want its ten-millionth novel rather than several never-before discovered aspects of UA, still unknown to all mankind, is a mystery, but academia is compartmentalized. I figured I could expand my second musical into a novel fairly quickly and then have most of the time for research. The short novel took longer than expected, but was fun enough. It was over 100 pages, if in typical novel format, but not finished to satisfaction. Finishing it or filling it out remains a possibility, but not at the top of my 'before-I-kick-the-bucket' list. Nevertheless, in the preface I had some fun with the novel genre, and I hardly hide a bit of disgruntlement for having to write a novel before I could do the more important linguistic research. The following is **that preface**:

Paradise Lost or Found? is a comedy novel, rather than the usual romance, mystery, or historical novel. Based on the musical of the same title, wherein some tourists on a cruise in a rickety shipwreck that finds a place to happen on a beautiful island, this novel's light style and disproportionate comedy may be better understood when imagined on stage in a context of light-hearted musical theater. Thus, this rather novel novel's comic nature may seem to some as hardly serious enough to be deemed or redeemed as a 'real' novel by conventional standards, though the novelists who suppose they know the illusive standards are hardly conventional themselves, except when it comes to writing and critiquing novels, then they suddenly wax conventional. So maybe this author is the unconventional among unconventionals. The status quo of literary expectation, as established by the anti-establishment humanities' global cloud of influence, 'highly' recommends that literature be somewhat encumbered with levels of meaning and message, rather than pure fun and delight. So in partial homage to that unwritten rule of the proponents who say "there are no rules" because they do not like rules, or hardly write down the rules by which they rule, except for the rules that *long awkward sentences* and *passives be avoided*, and that the work's message not *be stated* outright, an attempt *was made* to have this work *be accordingly encumbered* with substance as well, illustrating how one person's nightmare can be another person's dream come true and exploring the innumerable varieties of paradigms for paradise.

Note "that long awkward sentences and passives be avoided" are in a long awkward sentence with four passives. Indeed, some great novels have been written, yet sometimes I wonder if aficionados of fiction sometimes become so practiced in creating varieties of realities that the real reality gets lost in the mix? Many novelists comprehend well, but a few lovers of fiction seem uninterested in reality and despise any who remind them of it. It would take me 300 years to do my list of projects in reality

(language families, music, sciences, life histories), so fiction has not been an interest, but I might finish that novel, though it would probably be quite unconventional and probably disdained by the literary elite.

2006 was the year Sarah graduated from high school, and was Sterling Scholar runner up, and was first runner up to Miss San Juan County. Sarah and I, in Summer Experience, saw a great performance of Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, in Santa Fe.

Sometime Sarah's senior year, Silvia and I went to watch Sarah and the dance team perform in a large competition. Many schools were competing, so we were there a few hours. For some of the time, I enjoyed my usual pastime of pacing by the gym's back wall while reading a book with highlighter. They announced over the loud speaker that the cinnamon rolls were ready at the concessions stand. Silvia and friends were up in the stands on the opposite side of the gym, and Silvia told Gary and Carrie Bayles: "watch Brian." As they tell it, "I did not stop reading, but gradually turned my pacing that direction, put the cap on my highlighter, disappeared, and then reappeared with a big cinnamon roll." They enjoyed a good laugh over how well Silvia knew me.

April 9, 2006: Today at church they changed the theme on me. As ward chorister, I select the hymns each month according to the weekly themes given me, then lead the hymns. I quite like the job since no one pays attention to the song leader. But this one time I could see that the closing hymn might draw attention as a tad unusual for the meeting's theme. Kimberly Hiatt had just finished preaching a picture-perfect portrait of celestial marriage, and Stephen Hiatt, a professional marriage counselor and concluding speaker, continued polishing that picture. Looking at the closing hymn in the program, I wondered how I picked that hymn for a theme of marriage? Here loomed an incongruity that even I could comprehend. I later learned that it was not my fault: the powers that be in PEC changed the theme of the meeting for that day from 'Joseph Smith and the Restoration' to 'marriage' because the Hiatts were speaking, which is fine. I'm versatile. But no one told me. As they spoke, I searched for a more appropriate closing hymn. After these two talks on how glorious marriage can be and as soon as Brother Hiatt sat down, I stood up, quickly placed a 4 after the 29, and announced: "For a closing song we will sing 294, as 'Love at Home' may fit the theme of marriage better than … 'A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief' (29)." The congregation burst into laughter but eventually calmed down enough that most were able to sing by the 2nd verse, and the eruptions upon reflection during Sunday School were handled well.

A similarly humorous result, different than planned, happened one day as I drove back to the college for a faculty meeting. In an autopilot-like driving daze, I suddenly realized that smoke was blowing across the road in front of me. I looked to the left from whence it came and saw a sizable fire in Wilcox's backyard (100 S 300 W) expanding from a trash-pile burn that had reignited. It was close to an outbuilding, a chicken coop, starting into a wood pile and a wooden fence. I stopped the car, ran to the house, opened the door and hollered, but no one was home. I used their landline phone (of olden days) to call the fire dept and then ran outside, turned on a hose, and started hosing the fire. However, the fire was too big for a garden hose by then and kept growing in spite of the open hose trying to douse it. The fire's momentum was winning the woodpile, so I changed focus to alternately squirting the woodpile and the adjacent chicken coop to keep it wet, hoping to keep it from igniting. The firemen took a while to get there, but they finally did, and their more powerful hoses took over, making my help obsolete. They succeeded in getting the flames under control and limiting the damage to the woodpile. Before their arrival, I struggled alone with a relatively puny hose, while ashes and flakes of soot fell all over, leaving me speckled with soot and ash. But after their arrival, I was now free to get to faculty meeting. I was a little late, but I had a really good excuse. It's not every day that one gets to be a hero in saving someone's properties from burning down. So as I sat in faculty meeting, covered with blotches of soot and ash, I thought someone might notice and ask me what happened, at which point I could tell the once-in-a-lifetime story. But no one even looked at me. After the meeting ended, I went to the restroom and washed my face and cleaned up as best one can at a sink from a day of firefighting. In retrospect, I have to

chuckle at the juvenile in me being disappointed that no one even noticed, squashing the natural flow toward a really good story. Sigh. I did visit the Wilcoxes that evening, and THEY appreciated me. Yay.

Also in 2006, I decided I needed to get a draft of the *Uto-Aztecan Comparative Vocabulary* out. I had been working on it 20-plus years and had been telling the other Uto-Aztecanists the last 10 years that it was coming out soon, but without something to show them, they could wonder if it would ever materialize. So even though years of work remained on this massive reference work already worked on 20-plus years, I decided some how I had to pull it together well enough to produce a preliminary edition. So that summer of 2006, I hired Sarah and Jessica to check forms for me and type in changes, and Hayden and Justis to make some appendices for me, and Shana did some typing too, since she and her family were in town at the time. I was going 12 to 14 hours a day, pulling together their work, trying to stay ahead of their assignments, and do proofreading, revising, rewriting, etc. It was a humongous effort. Yet we got it to a point that a preliminary edition could be produced. I took 30 copies to the UA conference at U of U in SLC that year. All were impressed. Kenneth Hill, the most experienced Uto-Aztecanist, spoke well of it. Lyle Campbell, the foremost Americanist of all Native American language research, said he loved it. Many had good things to say about it. The next morning at the motel's complimentary breakfast tables, Silvia walked in, saw them looking at their copies, and overheard the Uto-Aztecanists saying good things about it. They did not know that she is my wife, so she got a genuine candid earful of their good words. Nevertheless, it needed much more work yet, so I continued working on it another year.

That fall Sarah was off to college and we were empty-nesters. After a few days, Silvia said that she really missed Sarah's bubbly personality. I decided to help fill the void and be more bubbly. Two days later I asked Silvia if she had noticed my being more bubbly. Somehow she had missed it. I can only assume that her powers of observation were not sufficiently developed to detect such fine hardly perceptible changes. Or perhaps more likely, I am simply not bubbly even when I try.

A few times early in the 3rd millennium AD, I would ride to Monticello with Norman Johnson and Howard Randall, both working for the county. Then I would walk back to Blanding, over the rivers (streams) and through the woods. I would walk past Monticello's Loyd's Lake, going southwest on the road up the mountain, then take the Wagonwheel Trail to the area near the dude ranch, then the dirt road that led to Recapture Reservoir, then have to do the last 4 miles on the highway. Norman and Howard sometimes passed me near journey's end on their way home, so it filled the work day, but was a nice walk and study-hike along the way, maybe 25 miles, longer than the highway route, but much more pleasant.

2007 I published the 2nd preliminary edition of the *Uto-Aztecan Comparative Vocabulary*, which 30 copies also all sold. So poetic! Her freshman year at BYU, Sarah traveled with and repaired costumes for the Living Legends, and her cousin James Stubbs did an impressive hoop dance.

April 15, 2007 was a memorable sacrament meeting in which our friend Steve Wilcox was released and our friend Kline Carroll was called to be bishop of the 4th Ward. Both spoke and both had known beforehand that the call was coming, being told by the whisperings of the Spirit of Him Whose Church it is. Carrolls had lost their son Eldon in a car accident the November before, and Kline was still grieving and one time was praying about such when he was given to understand that: Eldon is fine; do not worry about him, but prepare to be bishop.

Most significant in 2007 was that in the Timpanogos Temple, Sarah married Joseph Walker—a pleasant, kind, bright, easy-going guy, another plus in the family and 3rd cousin to the Jacks. Joe's maternal great grandfather was cousins with Vernon Jack. We were a little late getting Sarah there, and as Joe waited anxiously, a senior temple worker tried to reassure Joe by saying: "Nothing to worry about; if she doesn't come, we have a list of alternates to choose from."

Sometime during our years at CEU, a new person learned that Silvia is my wife and said to Silvia, "Oh, Brian is your husband, so you work here because of him." Silvia answered, "No, he works here because of me." True, I was there because she encouraged me to go to college and sacrificed much to

handle the home life while I did work and school nearly all waking hours for 7 years—the first 3 for the BA and then 4 more of graduate school later. As for her job(s) at CEU, Kay Shumway hired her to finish up something on a grant, but while Silvia was there, she saw unattended children in cars and parking lots, and so started the daycare. Then she started helping adults with adult education and became the adult-ed department, and then she earned a MA in child development and started teaching classes in that area. She created 3 jobs, none of which existed before she came, and two buildings were also built because she saw a need and talked to the right people. Yes, she was the campus powerhouse; I was just a teacher.

"So how did such a dynama (feminine of dynamo) end up with the likes of me?" many wonder. Do opposites really attract? Well, my wife does seem to attract absent-minded fellows prone to misplace their cars. Before we met, she had a date with one who, after an event, could not remember where he had parked his car in the stadium parking lot filled with hundreds of cars. So they stood in the midst of the exiting masses of metal until the others had left and his was left.

After we had been married some years, I too asked my wife out for a date (as well as other dates in the interim, of course). I was teaching an evening class that ended at 6:45 p.m. and the movie started at 7, so I told her that I would hurry home, and then we would head for the theater. The college is only 3 blocks west and the theater 3 blocks east, so the distances were not great. I taught my class, then jogged home quickly. I usually walk to work, since it is only 3 blocks away. I ran into the house, helped Silvia with her coat, and we stepped out the front door. There was no car. "Where is the car?" I asked.

My wife reminded me that contrary to custom I had driven it to work so that I could hurry home more quickly, but then I ran home, forgetting the car at work. Well, the theater was as close as the car was, each being 3 blocks away in opposite directions. So we walked briskly to the theater, arriving not too terribly late. Enroute I reminded her that I was not the first of her dates to forget where his car was. My wife replied, "At least the other guy knew where his car was when he picked me up."

Sometime in this first decade of the 3rd Millennium, I was eating at the cafeteria with Charles Lyman and learned that Edward Lyman Platt is his cousin and Mark's, Jed's, etc. (Ed's picture at back, mentions at 10th and 12th grades.) Ed's mom is a Lyman. We reconnected via email: he had been mission president in Brazil, now works for the Church's Liaison layer between General Authorities and mission presidents, owns the Linden Nursery (garden / yard store). Good man. He read my "Life by the Yard" essay and loved it. Said yard work is overrated. People ask him for a kind of grass that grows to 2 inches then stops growing, or ask for bushes that grow to a perfect shape and then no more.

2008 Julia was born, grandchild number 9. One Sunday morning in April, I awoke quite put out at all the impositions upon our time that keep me from doing more important things. I was in a bad mood. I did not sleep well and after a five-hour night, felt lousy. By the end of church, I had mellowed much, even desiring to increase in humility and love/charity, as I often try to do. Nice try. But I was still so tired. It seemed painful to do anything more than melt into a couch, yet I had to leave for and lead choir in less than hour, so no chance for a nap. The fact that about half the Sundays I felt similarly wiped out without a chance for a nap perturbed me even more. I begrudgingly trudged to choir, did my job, but the humor and good spirits of the good people had us all laughing and enjoying the practice regardless the inadequacies of the conductor (me). My heart swelled in appreciation of those good people.

On my way out of the building, I overheard Bill Bayles mentioned in a conversation, and as I drove home, I started thinking about him—not a better man in the world. He is so good, humble, peaceable, upright, noble, and pleasant—the kind of person Heaven will be filled with. Then as I pulled up to the house, I felt a wonderful love for all the good people in this good community. I tried to remember why I felt so put out earlier. Actually, I did not want to remember, because I knew that with a little effort I could remember, and then would feel put out again. So I basked in the good feeling, in wanting to do people as much good as I can in this life, and realized that that is what life is about. When the momentum of output begins to flow, it seems a greater refill is poured back in from The Outside Source, God. From a little effort and output to do an assignment, The Source of all good adds a sweet

momentum, and if we keep it going, by doing what good we can, instead of grumbling in frustration, joy fills the soul from doing good. How grateful I am to our kind God, whose selfless goodness, kindness, wisdom, and ceaseless output of love and effort rolls the whole universe toward whatever degree of good and sweetness each is willing to learn, do, receive, become, and pass on! Then I realized that God had answered my prayer of earlier in the day for a deeper humility and greater love for people.

My sentiments toward choir: Dad was a professional musician and was often the choir director when I was a teen, so I was enlisted from 13 or 14 on, and liked it okay. Not as fun as sports or hiking in the mountains, but fun enough learning to sing tenor and bass, and seeing how the composers put the parts together, as I was interested in composition. But after 20 years of it and as children and other multiple cares filled life, the regularity of choir wore on me. People who can sing AND play an instrument are too regularly "sought"; and having 4 or 5 church jobs had me often saying: "I look forward to Mondays to recover from my day of rest." The few times I tried to rest from choir a year, I was talked back into it (badgered?) as being so badly 'needed'. I did not dislike choir, just wanted some rest from it.

After 45 years of choir, the bishop asked me to be choir director. I answered: "How about if I do it this way? We rehearse 3 weeks and then perform every other month, and rest the alternate months between?" He agreed. So, I came to my first choir rehearsal as the new director and explained that plan to the choir. As I explained, I could see all the men on the back row perk up with interest, subconsciously nodding up and down with affirmative expression. Sounded good to them, but when I stopped talking, the women's responses were "but we like choir" and "we have to practice regularly" and "choir is my life!" So we voted and the women's 2/3 majority had choir continuing with no rest in the foreseeable future.

July 14, 2008: This morning I awoke at 3:30, earlier than planned. I timed my heart rate with the clock while lying in bed before getting up—27 beats per minute. I timed it twice, both times 27. Study-hiked long hikes all last week and my heart rate always is slower after more miles. I saw a mountain lion for the first time in the open. It ran away as I came around a corner. Twice saw bears other times.

Oct 4, 2008: Presented 'PUA *t > c before *c > s in Piman' at the Uto-Aztecan conference in Tucson—it explains Piman reflexes in many UA cognate sets that were not previously seen as connected.

Oct 8, 2008: Felt Heavenly Father's love for me to a degree not experienced in some years. It was a wonderful feeling, which increases one's love for Him and one's desire to help in His purposes.

Oct 11, 2008: While reading *A History of Knowledge* by Charles Van Doren, I realized more keenly that selfish desires underlie the world's miseries and unhappiness.

Nov 24, 2008: Heard some good quotes: (1) We spend too much time contemplating whether others love us and not enough time contemplating whether we love others enough. (2) To enjoy the Spirit's companionship more, avoid speaking evil of others. My pulse Saturday (41) and Sunday (37).

Also in 2008, I produced the 3rd and 4th preliminary editions of the *Uto-Aztecan Comparative Vocabulary* after another year of work, and was invited to UCLA to do a presentation on UA. Drove there and did the presentation. Dr. Munro, a nationally prominent UCLA linguist, accomplished in UA, Yuman, Muskogean, Zapotec, Kawaiisu, Tubatulabal, Takic, etc, said that Calvert Watkins, a renowned Indo-European scholar and retired Harvard linguistics professor, was present and told Dr. Munro, "We need to have more presentations like that." I later learned that Calvert Watkins was also Dr. Robertson's professor at Harvard. Relating to the Uto-Aztecan book is the following newspaper column:

A Book for the Worst-Sellers List

I finally finished the book destined for the **Worst-Sellers List**. What can one expect of a reference book only for linguists interested in the Uto-Aztecan language family? My first book (*Morsels for the Mind*) did much better. It made the **Best-Giveaway List**, my wife says. *Morsels* is much more interesting reading, and it only took 2 years to write. But the big book took 25 years to research and write. It should have taken only 5, but trying to find time to research with a full-time job, raising a family, ecclesiastical commitments, and keeping an immaculate yard (tisk) is like a McDonald's short-order cook trying to find

time to read. Nevertheless, the book finally materialized, and all 30 people in the world who wanted one have bought a copy. So after 25 years of work, I did not lose much at all.

Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary addresses the cognate sets (related words) in the Uto-Aztecan (UA) language family, a group of 30 related languages from the Utes in the north to the Aztecs in the south, with the Hopi, Pima, and several other groups in between. The last book on Uto-Aztecan cognate sets was published in 1967 and had 514 cognate sets. This work has 2,700 cognate sets, five times as many. It has received very favorable comment from other Uto-Aztecanists. Only five or six of us Uto-Aztecanists research in the whole language family. Some are more brilliant than I am, but had other priorities, one died, another became ill, and so like a tortoise among hares, I plodded along, did more digging in the data than others, and wrote the book. To become one of the world's foremost authorities in a field, it helps to pick a field that hardly anyone is interested in. Millions dream of being a pro athlete or a movie star, but no one dreams of Uto-Aztecan. Maybe it is the difference between making millions vs. losing only a little bit that leaves some fields wide open. Or maybe it is having to become familiar with 30 languages without knowing any well enough to speak them that makes most wonder "what's the point?" To some it may seem pointless, but like a huge jigsaw puzzle, as the picture begins to appear, language can illuminate the origins of ancient peoples, much about their movements and histories, and it becomes very exciting—more exciting than money, as is obvious from the amount of work vs. sales receipts. Yet while the field's most notable noted the book as noteworthy, my grandsons put it all in perspective. They do well at computers, so I hired them to create the appendices for this book. Justis (age 7) being a Harry Potter fan and knowing that that book sold in the millions, asked how many copies of my book might sell. After my disappointing answer—"maybe 50"—Hayden (9) said, "Well, I knew it ain't no Harry Potter." That sums it up. Maybe that should be its subtitle: It Ain't No Harry Potter.

2009 gently deposited Jace Walker onto earth, with a lot of help from Sarah, of course.
January 4, 2009: Bishop Kline Carroll delivered a simple and wonderful testimony on gratitude and how his heart swells with gratitude so much and so profoundly and so long some nights that he is somewhat sleepless. Now that is gratitude! I thank God for a warm soft bed, then fall asleep.

When Silvia and I turned 60, the children and grandchildren came with a wonderful surprise party. We knew nothing until Packer rang the doorbell. I was choked up with love and gratitude for my family.

My cousin, Reed, when he grows a full beard, now white, looks more like Santa Claus than any store Santa, and I always wanted to have him in one of my musicals in a somewhat Santa role. So in 2009 I finished writing *Has-Beens, Wannabes, and Rather-Nots*, another comedy, but with a serious thread throughout, starring Kris (kind of Kringle) Gardner, a grandfather who brings Christmas cheer in June to a small town while tracking down a pair of brothers (grandsons), whose runaway mother gave them up for separate adoptions as infants. The brothers (Greg Moses and Josh Shumway) ended up at the same high school, but did not know that they are brothers and became enemies (the story of the world). However, their Grandpa Chris tracks them down and figures out how to become involved in their lives by becoming the janitor at their high school. Reed said many people, referring to certain aspects of the plot, told him, "That is my story." That serious strand weaves through much more comedy. Rodney Kyles was a great stage presence. The Pugh-Chamberlain cousins are always great additions: Kimber Mitchell, Heather Palmer, Melanie Pugh, and Kelli Christensen was waitress and pianist. Also, Jeanna Grover, Kirsten Hendry, Seth and Jennifer Redd, Sade Kyles, Janelle Jack, Brielle Francom, Nicole Black, Jeannie Kirk, Arin Shumway, David Webb, and Megan and Katherine Winder. As usual, I played the numbskull.

Two hours before opening night, just before heading to Monticello for the first performance that June, word came of Dr. James Redd's suicide. He had saved Sheila's life, treated Sheila and Shana after their rollover, had done many people good, but was framed for some artifact exchange and arrested in a most horrid manner. We were shocked and shaken, some in tears, I felt sick. Awful. I knew the feeling and felt so low and bad for the family. How do we do a comedy at a time like this? Should we cancel? Monticello was a different community, and some were traveling 250 miles to see it, and most of the cast

wanted to go ahead. So we did. We drove to Monticello, warmed up and adrenalin took the edge off the tragedy, though few came. The next two nights in Blanding had sizable audiences and went well.

Also in June, CEU allowed Merry Palmer and me to semi-retire to a half year each. She taught fall semester 1010 classes and I taught spring semester 2010 classes, research writing. A half year off my last 5 years was wonderful and gave me more time to finish the two mammoth reference works sooner, one on UA's 2700 cognate sets (2011) and another on UA's Near-East tie (2015).

July 8, 2009: Saw La Traviata at Santa Fe Opera.

July 9, 2009: Was called to be 2nd counselor in the branchopric of the new Young Single Adult Branch, Mike Bradford as Branch President and Jeff Frost, 1st Counselor. Mike is as good as they come, and Jeff is a fun-loving, multi-capable kind of guy. An enjoyable 4 years with those two. We had fun helping the young singles have fun. One time when conducting, I announced: "There will be no PEC meeting next Sunday because 2 of the 3 of the branchopric will not be here. We won't mention any names, but I'll be here." Branchopric has 3 syllables vs. branch presidency's 5. Saves breath and time.

Another time, the teacher asked me in Sunday School class about marital advice. I said something like, "My wife and I once overheard some college girls talking about their wish lists of attributes that they wanted in a spouse. We later admitted that neither of us would have made the cut. It is good to have standards and attributes that one wants in a spouse. However, some are looking for the perfect person, but there is no such thing as a perfect person. No general authority nor their spouses ever found a perfect person either. So if you find someone that you like and whose company you enjoy and he/she is kind, not mean or abusive, and he/she is responsible to hold down a job and be a decent parent and/or provider and seems likely to stick with the Lord and remain active, and has 80% of your wish list, then that may be about as good as anyone finds." That answer seems to have been taken to heart by some, because within a week, we had three engagements in the branch. Hope things work out for them.

I also once said, "Take all the time you need to decide who you want, but once you both decide, no sense in long engagements." The whole branchopric wholeheartedly agreed with that.

Brinton Sharp was our financial clerk, and I was the branchopric member over finances, helping him do tithing each week. At the bottom of each week's donations report was a place for the initials of both the financial clerk and a presidency member, so at the bottom of every tithing report was BS and BS.

2009 is also the year when I published the **3rd edition of *Morsels for the Mind***. Besides serving as an English text, *Morsels* was compiled for a theme on thinking. First is its repeated thesis that "good writing is good thinking on paper." Many mistakenly think that good writing is flowery language or phrasing that thrills. While those are fine and may add to enjoyability, what does the writing say? Is its content substantive? Does it explain a new discovery? Does it illuminate something only foggily sensed previously, but not clearly understood? Does it reveal knowledge? Does it move people toward truth? Or away from truth? Contrary to contemporary stupidity, truth is not relative.

Secondly, many of *Morsel*'s articles have to do with thinking. "Thoughts on Thinking" and "Think and Do" have titles obvious to the realm of thinking. Other articles demand thinking, or jiggle a mind out of its ruts, or refute a prominent intellectual's thinking, or surprise those whose minds were made up or who thought they knew. "The Subconscious Mind's Role in Language Acquisition" will surprise most English speakers and most English teachers about what really happens in the language that they thought they knew. "The Minorities and the Mixed … and No One Is Left, Right?" challenges conventional thinking relevant to race, a hot topic today. "Granny's Rocking Chair Is Faster Than Any Jet" presents realities that few are aware of. "Hairy in a Hurry" may be a tad trivial, but shows what 'out-of-the-box' thinking can discover. "Banning Boredom and Loving Life" is a 'thinking' exercise that leads to helpful perspectives for many who are depressed. "The Fox of Westwater and the Rest of Us" is a thinking exercise regarding preparation for a future that happens in places at times.

Thirdly, 'Critical Thinking' seems the rage these days, and it is a good tool if the thinking is good. But some academic elites (tenured in the Great and Spacious Building) see themselves as 'master' critical thinkers when they are more 'missed-it' thinkers than 'master' thinkers, usually in certain departments,

acting as if they are the architects or guardians of critical thinking. In contrast, math and science deal with reality and demand reality-related thinking. The fields of English, social sciences, history, and such have some decent realistic thinkers, but also have brain-washees set on brain-washing the next academic generation with tales touted as 'critical thinking', like claiming that critical thinking must dismiss God as myth. Those thinking such have missed many facts and immense probabilities; they don't do the math. "Time Will Tell . . . On All of Us" explains several fallacies underlying that fallacious thinking.

Three articles expose the errors in the thinking of three renowned intellects. "Honor or Honors" explains a thinking error in Harvard professor Michael J. Sandel's article "Honor and Resentment." Amitai Etzioni was named among the top 100 American intellectuals, and his article "Working at McDonald's" offers a decent idea or two, but is more wrong than right in his larger perspective, which errors are clarified in "Eight Cheers for McDonald's." L. S. Stavrianos was a prominent history professor in both Canada and the USA. Stavrianos in "A New Axial Age" denigrates capitalism and praises Mao, a murderous tyrant responsible for over 20 million deaths with his 'economic principles'. "A Response to L.S. Stavrianos' "A New Axial Age" in *Morsels* untangles the spin and exposes the ludicrous logic. Reading the opposing views in the three pairs of articles was a good thinking exercise for students and exemplifies the thinking that we all need to do throughout life.

The problem behind many influential lies is that no one did the math or did not check it or the voice of the checkers is smothered. "The Federal Reserve Reserves the Right to Funnel Your Funds Their Way" is a rather mathematical analysis of a national and international scam that most have no idea of. The system put in place in 1913 robs Americans in at least 5 different ways, and the Keynesian economic lie (erroneous thinking) has been ruining various nations' economies worldwide for decades.

In the big picture, I am very glad for arriving at the career of teaching English and research writing. Good writing is good thinking on paper. Beyond the less important grammar and punctuation, the hugely important part of writing is thinking, something that many people do too little of, or quickly dart about the surface of instead of diving deeply into, or they practice defending a cultural pillar instead thinking thoroughly enough to see it as a paradigm needing to be tossed out altogether? Do they care to think deeply enough to discover truth and/or clarify it? Or do they do as most people do and adopt their culture's paradigms or the narratives swirling about them without thorough thinking. I estimate that over the 32 years, I have taught something north of 2,000 students, and hope that my efforts helped some to think more thoroughly.

In contrast to depths of thought, nothing wrong with the lighter side of simply enjoying something fun now and then. Not all of life need be too serious. The following is an example, though one could wonder whether sufficient thought was applied to this decision, as well.

Perhaps in the 1990s, give or take a decade, we and our good friends, Terry and Debbie Slade, along with a full high school auditorium were watching a program of musical numbers and the local cloggers performing on stage. At the end, the cloggers announced that a new clogging class for beginners would soon begin, that they needed more people, and they invited all interested to join them. Terry sat next to me; we looked at each other with expressions that said, "no, never, us clogging? wouldn't that be a hoot? Can you imagine? I'll do it if you do it." We both joined, practiced, and learned to clog decently under the direction of Joni Lyman Kane and Marsha Keele and others. Maybe there was one other guy among the dozen newbies. We became decent cloggers. We actually performed on stage with the group twice, did okay, and phased out after a year or so. But it's a fun memory … to me. Terry wants to forget it ever happened and hopes everyone else does too.

Living to 114 … with Ice Cream!

(a column from *Anecdotes as Antidotes to Wrench Us from Our Ruts*)

As my wife and I watched the news the other evening, a 114-year-old woman was featured. Imagine that—114! Born in 1895! Of course, the traditional question to all such wonders of our fast-lane, fast-food world is the secret of her longevity. She answered, "Ice cream." Ice cream!?! Not being one to doubt evidence from a study lasting 114 years (albeit a small control group), I immediately went to the store and bought two cartons of longevity—cherry at my wife's request and chocolate for me.

It's the most delicious health-food regimen I've been on in years. The fact that after four days in a row of this latest health plan I have a headache, a cold, pains in a few places, feel awful, am stuffed up, and can't breathe, I'm sure is simply due to the body's initial adjustments to more nutrition than it is used to handling at such accelerated rates, in contrast to my previous and evidently deficient diet of grains, fruits, vegetables, and an occasional steak. One of my daughters commented that even if ice cream were not discovered as the latest in longevity juices, she'd rather live 60 years eating ice cream than 90 without. I can understand that. In fact, that's exactly how I feel about ice cream too … when it's in front of me. And philosophy works … until you're 59.

Nevertheless, on the fifth day of our new regimen, I wasn't sure that I felt up to another couple of bowls of longevity, so I told my wife: "Maybe if I miss a day and only make it to 112, that would still be pretty good."

2010 Mary Jane Yazzie, Aldean Ketchum, Loretta Posey, and I finished the *White Mesa Ute Dictionary* after 3 years, sponsored by the White Mesa Ute Council.

Recently 3 different people told me what they heard about me in my running days (30s). Delton Pugh said he overheard out-of-town runners talking about "only one local guy you have to watch out for. He'll kill you on the hills." Delton said he knew who they were talking about. Kline told me of overhearing a pre-race conversation among out-of-towners: "So anyone we need to worry about locally?" asked one. "No. Except for one guy. He doesn't look like much—wears old clothes, but he's good, and has a kick you have to watch out for." Tom, at Shane and Tina's reception, said he heard a former Monticello high-school runner (Jensen) tell him that "when he ran in high school, there was this Brian Stubbs, who used to come and run in street clothes and cheap shoes and the first year he beat me good. So the next year I invited some of my running friends to run the race with me and see if we could beat this Stubbs guy. So a bunch of us ran, and he beat all of us again the next year."

The 2nd year that I ran the Monticello July 24th 5K race, Joe Davis told me, "Brian, you have to buy better shoes. When you come in those ten-dollar K-mart specials with so many holes that they barely stay on your feet, and then you beat us all, it makes us look bad. Could you at least buy some new shoes?"

In October, Silvia, Jessica and I saw Mozart's *Magic Flute* at BYU—wonderful, well done.

Sunday, Dec 12, 2010: A better Sunday than last. In the usual 14-hour day from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., I got a two-hour break from 4 to 6 pm, and intentionally strolled into Messiah rehearsal late to avoid too much sitting, having barely gotten rid of my left-leg blood clot the day before (Saturday) with a 13-mile walk, which clot I got from 14 hours of sitting the Sunday before. In Nov-Dec, a typical schedule is 8-10 PEC, 10-1 the block, 1 to 3 or 4 branch business, 4 or 6 a meeting or fireside, 7-10 Messiah rehearsal.

I mention this only because I want everyone to know when I do suffer a little. What else do forebears do, except collect woes from their times to relate to posterity? And the woes of my times are lives full of sitting—desk jobs, meetings, rehearsals—and buying, registering and maintaining motorized vehicles of every sort to do all our walking for us: cars to drive us where we used to walk, riding lawn mowers to mow our lawns, elevators to climb stairs for us, and 4-wheelers to do our hiking for us! Of course, no one expects us to enter a world of such woes without preparation. So the preparation for a future of sedentary immobility is substantial: we are trained to be inert from an early age by having to sit

quietly through 5 days of school and another day of Sunday school. But Saturdays we get to shuffle—sweeping floors, raking leaves, or taking out trash. It ***is*** a tough life—I just want posterity to know.

No medical issues from running or walking 100,000 miles, but from a 14-hour Sunday of sitting, I got a blood clot. The pain was not great, and drinking lots of water with a 12-mile walk cleared it up, but what irked me was that life is so rigidly structured with so much sitting as to cause blood-clots! And on Sunday, no less, a day of rest. No time to lie down, but have to sit so many hours as to get a blood-clot.

By belated and urgent invitation, I played Will Roger's father, Clem Rogers, in the community musical of *Will Rogers Follies* in November 2010. It was fun. And being in someone else's musical is so much easier than writing one, composing the music, assembling the cast, directing it, on top of learning one's own part. One part in someone else's folly is a simple folly … er joy, except that I could never get all the words to one fast song. I would sing the solo fine off stage, but the words had to roll out so fast that when on stage, I messed up in a different place every time. But the cast enjoyed my adlibs when my mind could not find the real words fast enough. The audience may not have known the difference.

A few years previous to 2010, some powers-that-be, whether USU or Utah State legislators or all of the above, wanted to subsume CEU under USU, the state's web-network school. Northern powers-that-be began talking to the two CEU campuses, initiating discussions and claiming advantages for us to be under USU. Over 95% of us at San Juan Campus were not in favor, and the percentages at the Price campus were similar. The foreseeable disadvantages seemed to far outweigh a few flimsy advantages (carrots) that the northern voices were tossing toward us. Yet then we learned that the legislature was seriously considering doing the change, either not listening to us or somehow hearing misinformation in upper grapevines that we were okay with it. NO!!! Neither campus liked the idea.

So I wrote a letter to the editor, published it in both local papers, and emailed a mass email to most of the Utah State legislators' email addresses, listing at least 8 ways in which it would not be good for our students. Word came back about echoes through the legislative halls of the State Capitol like, "Wow, that was quite an uproar; we had no idea how strongly CEU was against it." The matter died an appropriate fizzle, an example of the 'pen is mightier than the sword', but only temporarily in this case.

Not many years later, March 2010, the legislature simply legislated it without asking us, but simply informed us that it was done: we were now under USU.

A major objection was that many of our student body, especially the Native American half, prefer and do better in live classes, not classes piped down from Logan 400 miles away. The rather reticent students like being able to talk in private with a teacher after class, not putting their questions into microphones in front of a state-wide class whom they cannot see. We predicted that such a change would reduce our student body. We were exactly right. When I started at CEU early 80s, the student body size was 150-200, but 25 years later, our CEU Blanding Campus numbered 1,000 or so. Now, more than a decade since the merger, the numbers are back down to maybe 300.

Another disadvantage would be a future lack of our present autonomy. Locally, we would have meetings and solve our problems efficiently and promptly, not so when subject to a statewide bureaucracy based 400 miles away. In fact, at CEU Blanding, we already had a USU extension office and USU classes and programs were available on our campus, and all were free to take USU classes if they wanted. Their numbers were maybe 50, while CEU's numbers were near 1,000-plus. We already knew how USU systems worked and they did not work as well, paperwork got lost more often, mix-ups at Logan campus could not be straightened out as quickly via phone-tag 400 miles away vs. walking to our office a few feet away, students preferred live teachers, etc, etc. After the USU USUrpation (my term then and now) and after I retired, I heard many lamentations from counselors, staff, faculty, and students of how much more difficult it is to make things happen and get things done under USU's "rules" and bureaucracy.

We were more independent. We built two buildings at 1/3 the cost that a similar square-footage would have cost if the state had built it. Silvia's daycare was built by the maintenance crew. On the adobe classroom building, all of us helped. I did dry-wall taping. The passive solar had it at 65 degrees in January before the heat was even turned on. For such buildings, we raised some of the money

ourselves and just did it. When the day came to lay sod for a new lawn, faculty and staff came in work clothes and carried it from truck to dirt in 20 minutes; we did things ourselves in CEU days, but I am retired now, no longer have to deal with it, and they're surviving somewhat.

We were larger than Dixie College when it became an independent institution and further from Price (200 miles) than Dixie from Cedar City (50). Why were we not made independent? USU wanted our Native numbers for grants; a recent example is a USDA $500,000 grant to USU for Native American education (*San Juan Record* Jan 1, 2024), which is fine if it benefits Native Americans $500,000-worth, but as with most gov grants, the institution benefits more in new jobs, helping to pay existing jobs, etc.

Silvia retired in 2010, and I told her that after she retired, they would have to hire 3 people to replace her, and I was right: (1) She saw the need and created the CEU day care, and managing it was a full-time job; (2) She did the adult ed, GED, and high-school completion programs; and (3) she taught the family and child development college classes. After she retired, they hired one person to run the daycare; they assigned someone else to take over teaching the college classes, and had someone else do the high-school ed programs. For the last two, their new assignments were only about half their load, such that replacing her added up to about two new full-time jobs, filled by 3 people.

2011 was my turn to host the annual Uto-Aztecan conference, an informal gathering of 30 to 40 friendly linguists who work with a Uto-Aztecan language or several, presenting papers each summer to share what they have recently been working on. Anticipating the conference, I knew it was time to do a mostly final version of the *UA Comparative Vocabulary* (though a 2nd edition happened in 2020). It had been three years since the 4th preliminary edition (2008), so this would be the first "real" edition. I was always working on it, but the preceding year, from summer 2010 to summer 2011, I worked feverishly much of the year, trying to refine and work out glitches. Perfection is never possible, but trying to do so gets one closer than not trying. I was willing to donate half the cost of producing the book, and USU agreed to pay the other half, so that all attendees received a free copy of the new publication.

Cienna, our 11th grandchild, was born.

One afternoon Don Tibbets came by to visit—a good man with a good heart. He had us laughing more than I had for some time. He phrases his interesting insights in interesting ways that are heart-warming and hilarious. As Joseph's friend, he reminded us of Joseph's qualities: a leader, took charge, always positive and entertaining, life was never dull around Joseph, and he ignored cliques. He was good to everybody and was happy to include anybody. It was an uplifting and refreshing conversation.

I love Blanding! The good people of Blanding! Most who grow up in big cities like big cities, but not me. I grew up in Honolulu and Los Angeles, yet I like small rural communities, especially this small town amidst mountains and good people. I recently visited LA (2008), and could not get out fast enough. I slept in the hills above the city the night before, had time to comb **ALL** my hair while stuck in the freeway's snail traffic pointing to UCLA, did my presentation and discussions, then got out, and did not stop until I could sleep on the sand of the desert floor in Nevada's fresh air. But best of all is being in the mountains, walking among the pines (with a good book), breathing the mountain air, enthralled by a new scene every few strides, and only minutes from town! In contrast, my wife likes big cities—the hustle and bustle and noises of the metropolis. I do not, and that is okay; we both like ice cream. She grew up in Buenos Aires, larger than Los Angeles. She thought Provo was a small town. Then I brought her to Blanding. But now she likes this pleasant populace perched near the pines. It is the good people.

While many rural communities might vie, the goodness per capita in Blanding exceeds the dozen places I have lived. Good people live in big cities too, but the percentages are different. Visiting LA, I had to slow down at times to find parking, read street signs, and impatient folks yelled words at me that I had not heard since I lived in LA. Blanding people do not do that; they drive around two motorists stopped and talking in the road, and may smile and wave as they pass. So pleasant is life here by comparison! Knowing most of the town and liking everyone I know has me living in a town full of friends.

I walk three blocks to work, instead of commuting an hour each way, and Phil Lyman's Ice Creamery is only three blocks the other way. Talk about location! There are many reasons I like Blanding, but an enjoyable job 3 blocks west, ice cream 3 blocks east, mountains all about, and the peace and quiet are four, and a thousand friends are a thousand more.

2012 was the last time I got to teach Introduction to Music at CEU/USU, which I enjoyed more than teaching English, Spanish, or algebra. The CEU music department knew my compositions, that I played cello, that my father, a PhD in music, was a university professor of music, and that I was good for teaching Intro to Music, but after the USU merger, USU decided that the students would have to take the music class piped down from Logan, because I had no graduate degree in music. I conceded, "True, I have no degree in music; I just learned music from my Dad (and studying scores) like Mozart did (from his dad and studying scores)." The administrator, puzzled and perplexed, thought a moment, then said, "Well, Mozart wouldn't be qualified to teach for us either!" (He had no degree in music.) Telling! But I had plenty to do. The Blanding campus counselors mourned the most, saying that students enjoyed my music class much more than those piped down over the system. In my class, they learned the basics, how to play a major scale of any key and its relative minor, some typical chord progressions in compositions, the instrument groups, history of music, brief bios of a few famous composers, and we listened to the great compositions. Many had never heard Baroque or Classical music and were surprised to learn that they liked it. I invited them to bring their favorite CDs. We would listen and then I would play by ear the melodies and harmonies on the upright keyboard and show how their favorite music used the same chord progressions as the Baroque and Classical composers. That surprised them. Dad (professor of music theory) was impressed with my ability to play by ear, and years after my 5th musical, he also said that I was a better composer than he was. Feeling generous in compliments that day? Maybe. However, another time he said it was also apparent that I had not had the class (music theory), but that I composed amazingly well for never having had the class. I figured out how to take that as a compliment too.

About February, the person assigned to write the branch annual report was not getting it done, so President Bradford asked if I would do it. I agreed, but then wondered: Does anyone really read these ward and branch reports? Or are they just filed away? I decided to find out whether anyone actually reads them or not by writing such a report that if they really are read, that I WOULD HEAR ABOUT IT!

Excerpts from my branch report: "The Blue Mountain Young Single Adult Branch began the year January 1st in recovery from the New Year's Eve party of the night before, i.e., sleeping off the sugar high. … Tuesday night is temple night. One Tuesday we did sealings. After hearing the ceremony's narrative several times, one counselor (bro bri) noticed one difference between marriage sealings for the living versus for the departed. Both are identical except that sealings for the living end with "and now you may kiss across the altar." We inquired about the possibility that when young single adults do the vicarious work for the departed, might they toss that in now and then, and once word got out, it might increase temple attendance? But we accepted the answer given without complaint." A quick response from the Stake Presidency assured me they DO read the branch reports. They actually liked it, and the next years "they fought over who got to read the YSA branch report first," is the exaggeration I heard.

2012 is also when I wrote the first version of this life history. Silvia convinced me to go to the doctor for a physical. Tests said that I was perfectly healthy, except my PSA was borderline at 3, when 1 or 2 is preferable. The doctor initially thought it fine to wait and not worry, but after thinking about it 5 more seconds, he suggested going to a urologist up north, getting a biopsy, colonoscopy, etc, to be sure there was no cancer. I had recently read that medical procedures on prostates often do more harm than good, that even if there were cancer, that it is slow-growing and one is more likely to die of something else first. So I decided that not worrying about it awhile would be fine. I went home and told Silvia what the doctor said. She said, "You should go get a biopsy, colonoscopy, etcetera, or start writing your life history." I thought awhile and agreed: Now that is a good idea! I went to my computer and started writing my life history. My grandchildren were another reason to write it. The older ones were in middle

school or beginning high school, when life can sometimes get hard socially and emotionally, and I wanted to provide them some assurance that things are not as hopeless as they may seem some days. Just keep going, do what you can, and things turn out, and another day can look quite different. I also made it a fun, entertaining read so that they would be more likely to keep reading it if they started. It worked. My children told me that the teen grandchildren did read it, because they enjoyed it.

The Marathon

At age 63 in May 2012, I ran a 2nd marathon, 30 years after the first. The write-up in my newspaper column is as follows: My daughters, Shana and Sheila, and my good friend, Kline Carroll, all decided to do the Huff-to-Bluff marathon and asked if I would do it with them. Sure! What have I got to lose—other than life, use of a limb, or pride? Losing the latter was guaranteed; the first two were probabilities difficult to determine without experimentation. So, I agreed to bring the old Clydesdale out from pasture and do the Thoroughbred thing one more time. I had done a marathon three decades ago, in my 30s, when I was a real runner—college cross-country, 5Ks in 16:25 to age 40—but after the marathon, I decided a marathon is borderline crazy. In fact, scratch borderline. But we crazies do crazy things sometimes.

For the first marathon, I prepared diligently**:** 15 miles on Mondays, 12 Wednesdays, 18 or 20 on Fridays, with short 6-mile runs the days between, for two months. I even ran 26-miles two weeks before, just to know I could do the distance without stopping. One was not supposed to do that, but if I was already scheduled to do something crazy (a marathon), then what does one more crazy idea hurt? In that first marathon, I did 7-minute miles the first 20 (2:20 at 20 miles), but then leg cramps hit. I'd stretch, walk/limp a bit. With cramping muscles the last miles, I finished in 3:15. Otherwise, I could have done about 3 hours.

However, now in my 60s (instead of 30s) and 60 pounds heavier (220 vs. 160), I hardly pass as marathoning material, though I have always stayed in decent shape, jogging a few miles every day except Sundays, every week, year-round, every year since age 13. That only means that I am living proof that exercise alone does not keep the weight down. But to do dieting in addition? No! I have tried dieting, but always have to resume eating. Let's face it, mortality itself is a slow death, and dieting only makes it slower and a lot less fun. Besides jogging, I also dot summers with hikes from 15 to 25 miles, so as I considered my daughters' and friend's requests, I figured I could probably alternately jog-walk 26 miles whenever, with or without preparation, which is basically what finally happened. My only goal was to reach the finish line before the food was gone. Every week, I would tell my daughters**:** "I'll start training tomorrow." But not until it was time to taper down the distances the last week did I finally conform to the training schedule. I did taper the last week. Oh yes, and I also did the carbohydrate-loading … for months … years! I have read that many trainers have tossed out the carbohydrate-loading idea. That is sad; it was my favorite part of marathoning. I did do an 11-mile jog-walk once with Sheila (way ahead), and a 13- and 15-miler with Kline, with weeks between, but mainly my mere usual and daily doses of 3-to-5 miles a day. My lack of preparation and default approach had one advantage**:** I would suffer only one day instead of 3 months.

The scariest fact was the math. Math and physics said that carrying 220 pounds for 26 miles was the energy and effort equivalent of carrying 160 pounds 36 miles. So my doing a marathon at 220 was the effort equivalent of doing 36 miles when younger. That was unnerving. I thought about trying to lose weight in the preceding months, to make the marathon easier, but finally decided**:** Nah, it's easier just to run 36 miles.

The day came—as it always does—and at 4 a.m. I arose, dressed, and drove to the starting line. I was permitted to start at 5 a.m., an hour before everyone else, by simply adding an hour to my time. I knew I would be slow, and like I said, I wanted to finish before the food was gone. More critical than the race to the food was the porta-potty competition. I did not want to start with the large crowd to compete in the porta-potty lines, along the bushless barren between Blanding and Bluff. After some sweating to lower liquid levels, no problem, but the first few miles can be a problem. Leaving at 5 a.m., alone and under the cover of darkness, solved all such complexities. As for the food at the finish line, after I learned that aid stations would have all kinds of goodies every two miles along the way, I thought, "Maybe I'll be full by

the finish line." My daughters had to remind me that this was not a buffet-a-thon, but a running event. Ryan Heck, the race coordinator, said, "If you finish the race weighing more than when you started, you'll be a first." Maybe that is the record I should have tried for. Anticipating my hour-early start, I told some competitors not to worry**:** they'd probably pass me while I was in the White Mesa Store having breakfast.

Beginning at 5, the first 10 miles were quite pleasant. Settling into a rhythm, alone in the dark and quiet of the gradual dawn, I was soon watching the sun rise, and quite enjoyed the jog to White Mesa, completing the first 13 miles in 2:20 (just under 6 mph), though 30 years earlier I had run 20 miles in 2:20 (8 ½ mph). Of course, now I was carrying 220 lbs instead of 160, and 13 to 20 is near inversely proportionate to 220 vs.160, so it is less a loss of strength than a gain of weight. About White Mesa, the leaders passed me. After descending White Mesa hill, the left hamstring began to complain, then the right knee. About mile 17, Neil Joslin was roadside taking pictures. I hollered, "Hi Neil, how are you doing?"

"A lot better than you," he answered.

How did he know? Was it that obvious? Or did he just make a good guess?

From mile 17 to 21, I transitioned from a decent stride to not-really-a-stride-at-all, then to a ginger limp. Not long after the left hamstring and the right knee's continuous complaints, both thighs felt like splintered baseball bats, then the left groin's connect-place felt like it was disconnecting, and several other muscles joined in a growing choir of whiners—and not even in tune. After 21 miles, my walk was not much slower than whatever else I thought I was doing. Of course, no one had figured out, like I had, that I was really doing a 36-mile effort equivalent. So through these last miles, the wimps only doing 26 miles began passing me during my 36-mile effort. About this time, a guy passed me with a T-shirt that said on back**:** "No whining!" What nerve! Who does that T-shirt think it is, telling me what to do? Whining was the only thing that felt good.

Along the route I saw a sign "Road Damaged" and assumed it was referring to my legs. I did not mind when the sub-3-hour leaders passed me. I expected them before White Mesa, so to hold them off until the Mesa was a pleasant surprise, but as the miles passed, so did a lot of other people. Being passed by real runners like Josh Nielson and the Francom family was almost a privilege, but eventually even slow guys were passing me. I would look at each and think, "He's sure slow." Yet he had just passed me. That realization was nearly as hard as my cramping hamstring. I also got used to women passing me. Until a woman passed me who was carrying a backpack. Then an old man, even older than me, passed me. Then, as if those two were not humiliating enough, an older lady, older than me, passed me. And to think she had started an hour after I did! Of course, all of them were only doing 26 miles.

Perhaps I should not feel too dismayed. As I explain to my classes**:** men's faster times in general are not because men train harder. The only reason that guys, on average, can run faster and jump higher than women is because of the fact that nature devotes a certain percentage of women's body weight to simply being beautiful, but nature knows better than to waste anything on trying to make men beautiful, so we men start out as lean mean being-mean machines with a higher percentage of muscle to propel the lesser percentage of bone and whatever else. But as age endows us with more mass, such that muscle becomes lower percentages of the total, then trim women should be able to beat us belly boys, which was another fact verified in this experiment. It feels better to think of all this as my contribution to science.

Nevertheless, when the 70-year-old lady passed me, I quit running and started walking and writing this article. I had thought about bringing a book for the final miles, but decided I was already carrying enough extra weight. However, I did put pen and paper in my pocket for writing the article.

Actually, what more forcefully limited me to walking was cramps in my diaphragm and other rib-cage breathing muscles. I had to stop and arch my back to stretch the diaphragm and breathing muscles to stop the cramps so that I could breathe. I was fine while walking, but running 36 miles in 5 hours-plus required a lot of oxygen exchange and had me breathing very hard through 36 miles. So toward the end, my breathing-muscles began cramping and had me walking much of the last 4 miles. Those cramps happened in a workout too, but never had in all previous years. So I guess I am getting old, but doing 36

miles in 5 ½ hours without training is not bad for an old guy, 60 pounds overweight! My daughters did well—4:28 and 4:33—and I achieved my goal too**:** I reached the finish line before the food was gone.

A Cruise: October 2012, Shana, Carrie, Mom, and I went to the "last" Stokes reunion, to happen on a Carnival Cruise. Not many of the 400 descendants attended, but the few of us who did go had a good time, I'm told. Driving through L.A. twice was scary (to and from the port), but probabilities for enjoying the rest of the trip held some hope. I liked visiting with my relatives, when it happened, amidst the variety of distractions. Walking on deck and watching the ocean was a novel diversion for a while. Three buffet a day was deliciously risky: I was on buffet-cation. Jogging tight circles on the short dizzying track while dodging the other 40 using the same small oval made exercise less fun, and the metal-deck track was hard on ankles and knees. So I ate more and exercised less. Fortunately, I took a good book, from which learning is more fun for me than most other forms of trying to have fun. The available imitations of TV game shows were about as fun for me as watching grass grow. I know I am a wet blanket, quite worthless at inspiring glee in activities that others find fun. I really thought I was making progress toward being a people person, so it was a little disappointing to discover that I still like being alone with a good book more than being with too many people for too long.

As I scanned the expansive ocean and thought of the early explorers who sailed it and presumably "discovered" new places and knowledge to share with the rest of the world, I was reminded that research is today's frontier. Discovering new knowledge is as exciting as anything any explorer experienced! Seeing things that no one else has seen before and assembling evidence for the origins of ancient civilizations by research—how do bingo and luxuriant lounging compare? I cannot help it if research and learning while walking mountains are more fun for me than cruises. I admit: I am boring and weird. A dull, lackluster, stick-in-the-mud dud.

So did I enjoy the cruise? Yeah, it was kind of fun for a change for a few days. However, I was so happy to get back home to the mountains, to the research, and to jogging on dirt roads instead of on metal, alone instead of jostling with 40 others, and on miles of dirt road instead of dizzying repetitions of 10 laps per mile. It's hopeless: I am a home-body country boy. Nevertheless, everyone should do a cruise—just like I did—once every 60 years.

A few times between 2010 and 2015, Dad encouraged me to take one of my musicals to some performing companies in Heber Valley (where Mom and Dad lived their last 17 years) to see if they would perform one. He said, "Yours are as good as any of the others that they perform." That was quite a compliment coming from a professional musician who had played in the orchestra pit for dozens of professional operas and musicals, and had taught music theory, etc. I would have done as he suggested, but all my music was still in my homespun handwriting, not in digital nicety, and xeroxes of handwritten music would likely not impress. I needed to get the music in digitalized format first, which has not happened yet, and thus I have not yet shown them to any production company for possibly performing, though I hope to get them all published someday, another goal on my 'before-I-kick-the-bucket list'.

Speaking of frugality—pretend we were speaking of frugality—I once traveled to a Uto-Aztecan conference in central Mexico by bus, from Farmington, NM, to El Paso, Texas, and from there a 24-hour bus ride to wherever it was, far south. (An earlier trip than those listed in 2025 below.) I knew that one can get sick on Mexico's water and food if not careful, and since I knew nothing about how to judge such matters in Mexico, I took my small travel bag with a loaf of bread inside and a gallon jug of water in the other hand. The 2 days while at the conf, the linguists there knew the safe restaurants, etc, so I ate where they ate, but the other 2 days of travel to and from, I lived on a half loaf of bread and a half gallon of water each day, each way. I think my children heard that story a time or two when they asked for money for a sports trip of 2 or 3 days. I think they exaggerated a bit when recounting my side of the conversation for family entertainment: "Ok, here's $5 for the 3 days, that should buy 2 loaves of bread, some goodies, and the water is safe along the way. Just bring back the change. What? Oh, you wanted to eat at McDonalds with your friends some of the time? Ok, here's $10, bring back the change."

Another time Silvia and family talked about, "Wouldn't it be fun to spend a week on a boat at Lake Powell? I answered, "Yeah, we can put the canoe in the pickup, take bags of sandwiches, and live it up." That was not what they had in mind. They were thinking houseboat. All we ever did was canoeing, tubing, swimming, and hiking. I was dullsville at exciting fun, though we did hit Lagoon a few times.

Speaking of family trips, another time Silvia and the kids were thinking to go to Disneyland. They approached me, saying, "Some of the kids have never seen the ocean. Wouldn't it be fun to play in the ocean?" I said, "That's an idea." Their hopes rose. Then I said, "We can go to Texas."

"Texas? Who wants to go to Texas? We were thinking Disneyland!"

Mr. Dense answered, "I grew up in the Pacific Ocean, but have never been to the Texas ocean."

Whether that time or not, we did take kids to Disneyland, at least twice, I think, which was plenty for one who dislikes LA as much as I do.

Speaking of being oddball out—pretend we were speaking of what's coming.

Brian's house-keeping hints (heresies): (1) One time Silvia went out of town 3 days and I was in charge of the children. We had 'Dad's do-it-yourself bread-bar': 3 kinds of bread for toast or sandwiches, with the options of butter, peanut butter, honey, a few kinds of jam, apricot marmalade, lettuce, meats, etcetera, and fruit (oranges, apples, bananas). Luckily, they ate a cooked meal at school lunch every day. When Silvia came home, she was impressed to find no pile of dirty dishes, only one clean knife in the dishrack, which I washed after every meal. (2) One time in the mission field, I did not have access to an iron, and needed a solution for a badly wrinkled shirt. I put it on before bed, stretched the back and slept on my back half the night, then on my stomach some hours, and by morning it was much improved. Not perfect, but 80%. (3) A form of air-conditioning that works well in the dry Intermountain West is simply splashing water on me. Drenching shoulders and half the shirt may not be entirely appropriate for all public settings, like church or shopping at upscale malls, but it is fine for around the house, little-league games, or shopping at stores not on the scale. When dried out and hot again, re-drench. Artificial perspiration clean and free! (4) I have lived with no electricity, running water, fridge, hot water, nor oven. People did it for thousands of years before a century ago. It is not that bad. Warming the place and cooking with a wood stove, hauling water and wood, outhouse, and heating water for showers is less work than earning thousands for a nice house, utilities, etc. But that was before I was married. Yes, you can still feel sorry for my wife. I do. But I do not push the heresies, only watch the world complicate simple. Good balancers in the minus column for this bro bri brag-a-thon.

Speaking of disinterest in what often means much to many, I usually taught the early morning English class (7:40 a.m.) with both college and high school sections piped into the originating classroom. In the winter, I arose before daylight and got dressed in the dark, because I did not want to turn on a light and wake Silvia. I generally knew where things were, could mostly distinguish much by touch. However, many shirts all look the same in the dark, and when arriving at work, I was sometimes surprised at what I had put on. But it was not a big deal, since it was fairly common knowledge that my interests in style and color-coordination were nigh unto nothing.

2013 went well. In teaching, many days go well, while other class periods seem a blah for all. This year I made it a point to pray more often for Him to be with us—me and the students—to have a beneficial and enjoyable learning experience each class, to be with me to present well and with the students to see the value of what is made available, and this spring semester's 2010 classes went exceptionally well. I added the usual two final questions at the end of the final exam: (1) What did you dislike about the class, or what might be changed to improve it? (2) And what did you like about the class? Here follow the student responses from the 3 sites that the class was piped to:

Blanding CEU 2010 students: (1) I found very interesting the history and origin of English. (2) I have learned more in this class than in all my other classes put together. I really enjoy reading the book *Morsels*. (3) I found the articles in the book interesting and funny … nice class. (4) I learned so much more than in my first college English class in Arizona. (5) I loved the biography assignment, to do s.th. in

my late grandmother's honor. My family were happy to have it on paper and to read what we as a family remembered of her. (6) I enjoyed the readings in *Morsels* … interesting and entertaining.
SJHS 2010 students: (1) I learned so much from the discussions … topics that we could actually use in life instead of just English ... I really enjoyed the readings too …very interesting. (2) I have been repeatedly impressed. I loved coming to class ... I learned how to become a more independent thinker. It was the first time in my life that I actually looked forward to a writing assignment. (3) I probably learned more in this single writing class than I did in all my previous years of high school. I love that you teach writing for what it really is: thinking on paper. I have loved coming to this class and being surprised day after day by what I learned. (4) I really enjoyed reading all of the different articles … I also loved doing the biography assignment. I chose a grandparent I did not know much about, so it was great being able to talk to him about his life. I learned about the history of our language … it was all very interesting. (5) I really enjoyed reading the articles in *Morsels for the Mind*. (6) Most teachers just talk about English. So it was good to hear about other things that relate to thinking and writing … I really enjoyed this class overall. (7) I found most interesting the deep-thinking articles we have read that explain a lot about life. I enjoyed learning about how much our subconscious minds know about English. Fascinating! (8) I loved this class! I loved reading so many different articles and points of view. But I think the most interesting things I learned were how words change, how our weird spelling system came to be, etc. It was something that drove me crazy and now it makes complete sense. (9) I have been intrigued by many of the readings. They were wonderful and made me think. (10) This class taught me to really think about things. I really enjoyed this class. (11) This class was very informative. I learned more than I have in any other English class. This is the only class that challenged me and made me focus. I hope there are more classes like this, that really interest me to do good work. (12) I loved this class. I like the fact that we learned how to think and that we read and learned about current events. I feel like I learned more in this class than any other I have taken. We learned to be more responsible and to use our heads to find the answers. I feel like we learned to continue learning throughout our lives. (13) I was most interested in learning about the Federal Reserve. I had heard the term, but never understood the system and causes of inflation. This class made me ponder the things I did. We were pushed to take initiative and go beyond doing the motions. It is rare to have a teacher who teaches us to think rather than doing rote learning. I thoroughly enjoyed this class. (14) I enjoyed the class and learning things useful to life, besides English. And I really like the book.
Monticello 2010 students: (1) I personally appreciated all the non-English things that I learned, like the theory of relativity and the current issues and things you wrote about in your book. (2) I really enjoyed the biography paper and learning more about my grandpa. I found I really enjoyed writing about a person and almost recreating his life. (3) Discovering more about my grandmother was a wonderful opportunity. Lectures were always enlightening and left me thinking. I learned much about the English language that I did not know and also about other languages. The entire course was enjoyable and interesting. (4) Mr. Stubbs made class interesting by always having us reading different articles and books, in class and out of class. The sample research papers in the book were interesting and helpful to look back on. I learned so much more from this class than in my previous writing classes … that made me actually want to go to class and desire to be a better student. (5) I liked the articles we read from the textbook, all very interesting. My favorite assignment was the biography because I learned a lot about my grandma. This class helped me the most with thinking outside the box. (6) The most interesting thing I learned was how much our subconscious minds do for us. What our subconscious mind learns of our language was very interesting to me. (7) I loved all the random things that we learned in class. My favorite part of the class though was reading from the *Morsels* book. The readings really made me think. I have come out of this class with intentions to become a better person with a brighter future.

The students seem to be sincere because during the semester, 7 of their parents at different times told me how much their child is enjoying the class. So if they are telling their parents that, then the above align. The responses are a reward to know that most students liked the class and felt that they benefitted.

April 27, 2013, Saturday: President Redd's talk was very good at the stake conference evening meeting. A lesson on listening to the Spirit. Visiting a child's ward up north, he heard a lady speak of heading to the bank and being prompted twice to go to the drive-through. By habit, she pulled up to her usual parking place and had closed the car door, then she was told a 3rd time to go to the drive-through. However, she told the Spirit that she was already almost in and that it would be okay. Well, the bank was robbed and she spent the afternoon being tied up in the bank. She was not hurt, but it certainly was a bad day, all avoidable if she had listened to the Spirit and simply driven through the drive-through.

2014 I overheard a conversation about overly positive obituaries. So I thought about writing my own obituary—so as not to be too good, but not too bad either—maybe something like this:

Brian's Obituary: The charm-challenged chap was born before ADHD and several other hyperactive disorders were even identified, so he never got credit for all that he had.

Called to the Southwest Indian Mission, he spent two years trying to learn Navajo. Afterwards, he discovered how easy other languages were compared to it, became a linguist, and emerged as an authority in areas no one ever heard of, cared about, or would pay a salary for—so he taught college English to pay the bills.

He worked awhile at a trading post, where his social life was slower than a sloth on sleeping pills. So he passed by the Valley of the Gods headed for the valley of the goddesses (Utah Valley) where he met Silvia from Argentina. It became apparent that he had no money, no promising career, and no good ideas of what he might do for a living, but she married him anyway. Five children later, they retired, and at that point could better figure out what he had done for a living.

He was active in church all his life as a latter-day occasional saint, and maybe he is closer now—maybe. He was also helpful. When in the YSA branchopric together, he covered for Jeff Frost and ate Jeff's portions for him whenever Jeff was absent from any event involving food. His vicarious work for the dead was average, but in vicarious work for those missing refreshments, he stood alone without peer.

He was a kind and loving husband, father, and grandfather—most of the time—unless he did not get enough sleep or ate too much ice cream the night before. Even then, he was not mean, only dull and unresponsive. Other sources have him being dull regardless what he was eating.

Research projects in certain Native American language families were his hobby and fascination. In most other ways, he was nearly normal. Though many a linguist's life work finds its final resting place in files or landfill, his hope was to finish a few such undertakings before his own undertaking, lest they be lost to landfill should he exit without warning. A few did miss the deadline, but he got a good start on his 300-year before-he-kicks-the-bucket list.

He loved walking / hiking and hated sitting. He addressed the issue in his life history: "What else do forebears do, except collect woes from their times to relate to posterity? And the woes of my times are lives full of sitting: desk jobs, meetings, rehearsals, and buying, registering and maintaining motorized vehicles of every sort to do all our walking for us: cars to drive us where we used to walk, riding lawn mowers to mow our lawns, elevators to climb stairs for us, and 4-wheelers to do our hiking for us! Of course, no one expects us to enter a world of such woes without preparation, so the preparation for a future of sedentary immobility is substantial: we are trained to be inert from an early age by having to sit quietly through 5 days of school and another day of Sunday School. But Saturdays we get to shuffle—sweeping floors, raking leaves, or taking out trash. It ***is*** a tough life—I just want posterity to know."

He also enjoyed his music … whether anyone else did or not. He loved reading the scriptures in Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, German, or Quechua … and checked the Spanish or English when needed.

He lived a long and happy life—a long life due to eating a token vegetable now and then, and to running or walking a distance of four times around the earth, and a happy life due to his wonderful family, friends and almond fudge ice cream. (If he does not live very long, scratch that and replace with: If he had known he was not going to live all that long anyway, he would have eaten a lot more almond fudge ice

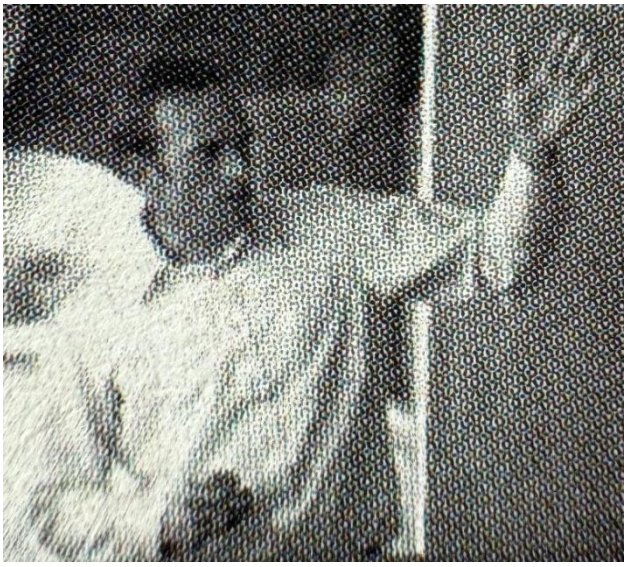
cream.) He ~~fought a valiant fight~~ … come to think of it, he did a wimpy no resistance whatever to the cancer. He is survived by all who are still alive and he plans to spend his first weeks of spirithood flying over all the Rocky Mountains that he never got to hike.

March 10: Last night Orlo and Kia hit a horse about 3 a.m. just west of Forrest Gump Hill between Monument Valley and Mexican Hat on their way to Blanding. Kia had a cut on her shoulder and the wind knocked out of her, probably by the seatbelt, and Orlo had a headache the next day, pieces of metal inches from their heads, lucky they were not killed or hurt worse. The horse totaled the car, smashed the front, the windshield, the roof, and flew over the top of the car. Luckily, I had just used the bathroom and was getting back in bed when the phone rang, so I heard Orlo's call and drove down to pick them up, and we got back to Blanding at dawn.

Sunday, April 20: Woke up in another ecclesiastically bad mood this morning; it started yesterday in contemplating all the overload expected of us: today is the only Sunday of the month we are both free to home teach, I have a fireside tonight, choir practice at 4 that I am going to skip, other rehearsals this week, have the abstract to write still, a talk to write for next week, the music section of Dad's history to finish, trying to finish the house before the crowd arrives, we have a dead car (battery) to jump from the key being left on and needing to be pushed to be in a position to be jumped, finals this week, behind on paper grading, and all those obstacles to what I really should be doing: finish the 3 books on UA, but I did finish one project. Yesterday finished composing the violin, piano, 2-cello piece, and today gave to Russell and Kirsten their parts. Some time ago I realized why I am a loner and like being alone: When I am alone, everyone present likes me and is nice to me, and no one tells me more things to do, and no one tells me what I am doing wrong of what I am doing.

Friday, April 25, 2014, 65th birthday: Shana and family came; Hayden graduated from USU with an associate; I retired and played piano for the USU graduation, prelude then later Pomp & Circumstance for the march, which I have enjoyed doing a dozen years, ever since one year when they could not find a pianist to play it nor relocate the music. I simply played it by ear, so no music was needed. The powers that be liked the simple solution, how I played it, and I became the regular for years, never saw the music.

I also retired that June at age 65, having taught at CEU 32 years. An enjoyable career! Taught English, wrote a new kind of English book (students liked it much more), and also enjoyed teaching algebra, Spanish, and music. Estimated number of students that I taught over the 32 years would be near 2,000, as I taught most summers as well as regular school years, and we had 4 quarters before changing to semesters. Because Sterling Scholar judges are drawn from nearby colleges, I was asked to be a Sterling Scholar judge most years in either English or math or foreign language or music for the Southeast Uah area, from Price to Montezuma Creek.



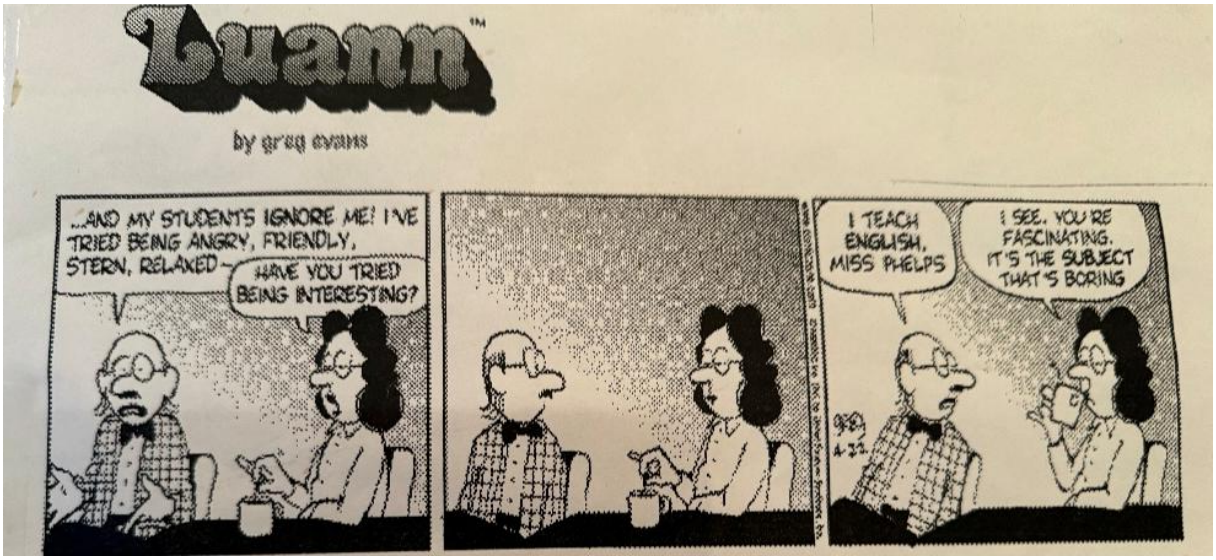
Brian's career, a nut in a nutshell: Stan Byrd likely took this only photo of brian teaching at the College of Eastern Utah, 1982-2014 (the original was clear; this is a copy of copies). First into math and science, brian, after a mission to the Navajo, became intensely interested in Native American languages and Semitic languages (Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic) and Egyptian, wondering if evidence of Lehite languages remains in the Americas? He decided to look. Articles published in peer-reviewed journals and the large reference work of 2700 cognate sets (a 30-year effort) were well received and praised by the other linguists researching in the Uto-Aztecan (UA) language family. Perusing most of the 190 American language families, he found that two were clearly from across the Bering Strait and most others bore no resemblance to Semitic, yet UA had 70-90% of its widespread vocabulary from Hebrew, Aramaic, or Egyptian, with good evidence of UA being directly descended from the Nephite-Mulekite merger. A few other language families (Muskogean, Quechua, others) showed much lesser percentages (15-20%) of remarkable leads of a UA-like infusion of Lehite mixture into those language families, which are not related to UA, like certain amounts of Latin infused into several unrelated language families. *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan* (also a 30-year effort) shows 1657 parallels that a fair linguist could hardly dismiss. While temporarily controversial—as most transoceanic proposals are, especially if pro-Book of Mormon—that work will eventually be seen as sound, and is already deemed so by nearly all who actually examine it.

That was his hobby on the side. For pay, he taught ESL classes and Arabic as a graduate instructor at U of U, and then a 32-year career at CEU, teaching ESL, English, algebra, Spanish, PE/cross country, and music classes. With an MA in linguistics and its more marketable branch ESL, and a PhD(ABD) in Semitic (Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic), but without dissertation, he taught at CEU and soon realized that teaching at a junior college in Blanding was more enjoyable than the hassles of a university. In Blanding, he had a house paid off, a 3-block walk to work instead of daily commutes on freeways in big cities, a peaceable small town of 2500, close to the Navajos and Utes, half the student body were Native Americans, pleasant personnel at CEU, no egos difficult to deal with as at universities, had as much time for research as big-school scholars, lived close to mountains and a language he wanted to research, etc.

Yes, my career often strikes me as strange. How many end up teaching their least favorite subject in high school? Yet even English is interesting through a linguist's lens. As well, truth and knowledge are supremely intriguing and are the focus of *Morsels* and of my classes, though some humanities circles deny truth, advancing new-age relative truths or contortions skirting truth. So I enjoyed clarifying some important issues and exposing flaws in how some intellects mis-think. After all, research and writing—that is, discovering, presenting clearly, reasoning and arguing aright—are what English is supposed to be all about. Fascinating stuff when truth and reason are the focus, and not furthering the false, as some do.

Studying 40 languages (just for UA) or investigating 200 seemed impossible! And it was impossible. Part of why no one had done it. Yet striving toward the impossible brings one closer, to see what no one had seen. A rotating study of so many means I mastered none, but did enjoy a decent reading knowledge of a dozen or so. Indeed, studying dozens of partially-learned languages may seem pointless, but it allowed seeing enough pieces of a huge puzzle to demonstrate an important unpopular picture. Academics urge critical thinking upon one's beliefs, confident that all who do so will loosen or lose their traditional values and religious beliefs, but when the searches substantiate the beliefs, the guardians of the great-and-spacious conformity are severely annoyed. But Heaven helped, wanting it done.

I always had some funnies on my office door. My two favorites follow.



That cartoon expresses too well how I used to view traditional English classes—not interesting. Thus, my classes were not traditional English classes, to the degree that time permitted. We did write and did read challenging readings, but also did more thinking and readings to spark more thinking in more directions than most English programs would consider relevant to the discipline. I refused to be tethered to that narrow view of what English is "supposed to be." Writing is thinking on paper, so unless thinking expands, the level of writing remains as was. The weakness of standard English programs is too narrow of a focus on grammar, punctuation, pretty language, and humanities' typical topics. Those are only 10% of what English should be, not the goal, as many English teachers suppose. To write what will change minds, solve problems, clarify the unclear, unravel false logic, expose clever deceivers, and reveal truth, one must be a deeper thinker and be well informed beyond the mediocre rote regurgitations that the intellectual elite often serve their common core of collegiate consumers in their effort to shape minds more than improve minds. Rather than training to conform, let expanded thinking lead to write-ups to wake up those set in the approved paradigms. The other favorite was this:

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DO THIS—SURVIVAL IS NOT COMPULSORY!

A Perfect saying for those not getting the cause-effect aspects of life, and for the spoiled softies who think they can do as they please and avoid the consequences of only doing as they please.

Of the 7 offices on faculty row, Don Smith had the last office on the row, the 7th; Shane Brewer was in the 6th; and I was in the 5th. When either Don or Shane was not in his office, students would often come back to mine, open my door, and ask if I knew where Don was or where Shane was? When I was on sabbatical, the interruptions became so frequent that I put another sign up, which read: "NO, I do NOT know where Don or Shane is!" The sign worked for the most part, and soon became a known fixture that gave a periodic passerby a giggle. I got a giggle once when a legitimate inquirer was at my door asking me something, and Shane came walking down the hall, and without missing a beat, said to the visitor, "Hey, don't bother our secretary. He has work to do!"

The essence of a talk given April 27: When Silvia and I were raising our family and all were still at home, we would buy a half gallon of ice cream once in a while, and each family member would enjoy a bowl. Soon the kids would go to bed and usually Silvia too as I stayed up to correct papers or research. The next morning the conversation would go something like this:
Silvia: What happened to all the ice cream? There was still half the container left last night.

Brian: It was really good, wasn't it? And THAT is why there is none left.
Silvia: What? You ate all the rest?
Brian: I did not want the kids to get sick eating too much ice cream. I bore all the ill-health effects myself to spare them the slow death—sacrificed my body for the team.

That is called rationalization, the source of most of the world's problems. Some people rebel, but most wrong turns start with rationalization. We want what we want and become good at justifying it. The world goes with what they want, not God's wisdom and commandments. They put self before others, whereas humility puts others before self. Humility is the foundation of all other virtues. Brother Soares cites the scriptures that none are acceptable before God except the meek and lowly. Christ said there is no greater prophet than John the Baptist except He Who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven (Luke 7:28). That means Christ is considering Himself least in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Being meek is being gentle, calm and strong, peaceable and serene, not contentious. In fact, putting oneself as the lowest and servant of all means being very strong. The Savior said, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart" (Matthew 11:29). We learn of Him by feeling His Spirit.
The Apostle Paul said, "the servant of the Lord must not strive (i.e., not be contentious), but be gentle and patient." In the DC, the Lord says, "Be thou humble, and the Lord shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers" (DC 112:10). That is quite a promise to be led by His hand and have prayers answered. Brother Soares says, "The humble are meek and have the ability to influence others to be the same." The opposite of selfishness and rationalization is love and integrity. When we like doing good, when our hearts' priority is wanting to bless others' lives, we are going the right direction.
The three degrees of glory are filled with three kinds of people:
The lowest or Telestial Kingdom has the people who put themselves above others: the thief who steals considers himself more important than the one he steals from. They want more than they give.
The Terrestrial Kingdom is the kingdom of the just, the decent people of the earth who treat others fairly, who want to give equal to what they are given.
The Celestial Kingdom is described as containing the valiant, those who sacrifice and want to give more than they are given, those filled with love and charity, whose hearts' desire is to bless others, to do others good, less interested in what they receive and more interested in what good they can do for others.
They have no need to rationalize, they want to do all the good they can
The Telestial folks want stuff to come to them, not so interested in putting out for others that much.
Terrestrial folks are just, they're fair, willing to put out equal to what they receive.
Celestial folks have charity, want to put out more than comes in, want to bless more than receive.

Tuesday, July 1, 2014: Yesterday walked 8 miles in the mountains; today walked 10. In my 40s and 50s, on a 30-35 mile walk I did not even get tired until after 25 miles; then early 60s I noticed 15 miles felt like plenty, though years earlier, 15 miles was not even a workout. Now, at 65, I am tired after 12. I cannot believe what small piddly amounts make me tired now. Getting old, I guess.

Silvia noticed me looking more tired than before and asked me if I might have cancer. I wonder—a little pain under the left rib and an occasional other—but if so, I finish what works I can and then die the old-fashioned way—for free. Maybe Silvia and I are having a race to the other side, her by going to doctors, me by not going. We'll see who wins.

July, during many days this month I have felt God's love and comfort rather consistently—a quiet peaceable soft joy. He is being very good to me. Maybe because I am realizing more profoundly how weak and nothing I am, as we all are compared to Him, but to think on Him and steadily abide in Him—that is our only chance of really being something.

In September I did a seminar sponsored by the BYU linguistics department of 3 presentations over 2 days in a room that held 40-50. It was intended mainly for linguistics faculty and students. While a few linguistics faculty and students attended when their schedules permitted, the room was mostly filled with other interested persons from across campus, which was okay. Via various grapevines, I heard good comments from several faculty and the secretary said she heard good things from faculty too.

2015 January 8-11 flew to Portland for the national SSILA conference in which I was asked to give the first presentation of the UA session celebrating the centennial anniversary since Edward Sapir's establishment of UA as a language family with his 1913 and 1915 papers. It was an honor to be asked to give the opening paper, and it went well.

February 22: Brother Kelly Pugh came home teaching and enjoyed speculating that I would be the next bishop. I included him in a list of 10 men who would be better choices (and the eventual bishop and both counselors were among the 10), and then I listed the reasons why the Lord should know better and why I should NOT be considered: (1) I already have a hard time making friends; (2) I am bad at names; (3) I am old and forgetful, (4) not spiritual enough, not polished bishop-like material; (5) I would have PEC meetings walking circles around the gym, no more sitting meetings. People would not stand for that! (6) I think the Lord values my research enough to not weigh me down with administration. Tens of thousands can do bishop, while I am all alone in doing Lehi's language genealogy. (7) Plus, I am always tired, yawn a lot, and would have the whole congregation yawning 10 minutes into the meeting. (8) And I would be criticized for suggesting calming music and sedatives for anyone with too many good ideas of what the rest of us should be doing.

Friday March 6: At the Mesoamerican Linguistics Conf, spoke on the Tubar and Guarijio area having Nahuatl peculiarities. It went well. John Pohl, a Mesoamericanist, said he liked my presentation, also noticing Nahua ties to that area. Kerry Hull happened to be there, a good linguist and a good man.

Another day, Sarah told me of Stephen and Kimberly Hiatt telling her the story of my coming to run a race in my usual old baggy long pants and holey tennis shoes, such that the out-of-town runners in their latest high-tech running clothes and expensive shoes, look me over, disbelieving I was for real, thinking, "There's one person we don't have to worry about; surely he's only a spectator; no chance he's a runner." But then I beat them all.

Summer: Silvia was diagnosed with breast cancer. They successfully removed the small lump.

Sunday, Sept 13: Regional stake conference in Midway. Apostle M. Russell Ballard gave one of the best talks. Some things I remember: Do not over program yourselves or your children, even if all are good things. Not all of your time needs to be scheduled full. Cut some things out, to relax and enjoy life some of the time. Answer people's questions, nothing wrong with questions, the church wants to be transparent, but do not be deceived by false voices who do not give the Lord's words and servants equal weight. One is open to deception when not reading the scriptures regularly.

In September, **Jessica married Jorma Hayes**, good man Jorma is, a hard-working contractor. As he built Sarah's house, Ron McDonald watched from his house and told me: Jorma is strong. I've worked construction and have watched many builders, but I've never seen one person do the two-man jobs that Jorma does, like carry 8' x 4' pieces of plywood up a ladder to the roof, hold it in place with one hand while he nail-guns it with the other.

Also in September I finished the book ***Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan***, and sent the PDF files to the publisher after working on it most free hours for 30 years. Jerry Grover was the good man to sponsor its publication. Though not planned that way, Sapir's publications (1913, 1915), which established the Uto-Aztecan language family, and *Exploring* (2015), which explains its origins, are exactly a century apart (1915-2015).

As I stated in that work: "Knowing how unwelcome such a proposal would be in the linguistic community and being a peace-loving recluse by nature, I have been in no hurry to invite the avalanche of controversy upon me. However, equally risky is pressing my luck in postponing a presentation that should reside on this side of the mortal divide. So as youth becomes a more distant memory, I end the four-decade delay to share these findings." With its publication, the battles began.

During this year, I produced and sent preliminary editions of *Exploring …* to 30 or 40 fellow linguists specializing in Uto-Aztecan languages (the world's most knowledgeable in UA) and Semitic scholars for possible feedback before publication. I have enjoyed many friendships with my fellow Uto-

Aztecanists, after meeting with them and presenting papers over 35 years at the annual UA conferences 1982-2017, and had earned respect among them as "the only one who always presented a comparative paper" as Jane Hill put it. After the 30-year effort to compile and publish *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* in 2011, that massive reference book was a new standard in comparative UA and praised by all the Uto-Aztecan specialists. Yet *Exploring* was a new animal that they had not dealt with and most wished it would go away. While most remained silent on the matter, several offered positive assessments. Besides the favorable exchanges years earlier with Karen Dakin and Ray Freeze reluctantly admitting that the data were persuasive, with sound correspondences in order, etcetera, at this time David Shaul, a 3rd prominent Uto-Aztecanist, said it was solid work.

Lyle Campbell is a Nahuatl and UA specialist, and the world's foremost authority in the whole field of Native American historical linguistics, and has kindly spoken well of my work since we met, chiefly of the *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* (2011). When I did the 2020 update of that work and made it available as a PDF online, he emailed, "I'm really glad to see this, glad you did it. It is a really important reference book, so it definitely deserves to be openly available. It should be a big help in UA studies" (April 1, 2020). As for the Semitic-UA preliminary edition that I sent him, he was cautious, but later positive: "You know that convincing people is swimming against a very strong current -- the burden of proof is going to be very high. Meanwhile, I'll attach a copy of the proofs of the book I did with Bill Poser that is mostly about what is needed to make a convincing case of a distant genetic relationship and why so many proposals don't attain the level of plausibility to convince scholars" (Feb 8, 2015). The next day he emailed, "I started looking at your book [Exploring] today, only had a few minutes … I was impressed with what I saw, of how much you have and the obvious similarities there" (Feb 9, 2015).

Obviously, he started out skeptical (as everyone should) and may not care whether the case is viable or not (and no one can blame him; who needs more controversy in their life?; I'd like to shed some myself), and he may emit a very different sentiment if pushed to do a formal review. Nevertheless, when he did look at the data, he said good things about it. Eric Elliott, best specialist in Luiseño (a UA language) spoke well of it. Dr. John Robertson, Harvard-trained historical linguist, has been the strongest advocate for the strength of the case for decades. Both he and Dr. Elzinga (specialist in UA Numic) published positive reviews of *Exploring* (citations in "Answering the Critics in 44 Rebuttal Points" online). Royal Skousen, another excellent linguist, deemed it a strong case. Mark Davis used the case in teaching historical linguistics. Mary Ritchie Key said good things of it years earlier, and we mentioned David Kelley's very positive assessment at 2004. So Robertson, Kelley, Freeze, Dakin, Shaul, Campbell, Elliott, Elzinga, Key, Davis, Wescott, and Skousen, all good linguists (7 of the 12 being non-LDS linguists), all said good things of it, and a few others leaned positive without wanting to say it clearly. Several Semitists also said good of the Semitic side of the data, but declined judgment on the UA side, not knowing UA. In fact, every linguist who looked at very much of it spoke favorably or was silent; the only 3 who said bad about it did not even look at very much of it, as is apparent in what they said.

2016 I published *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*, which explains how the Uto-Aztecan research is relevant to The Book of Mormon and touches on other language matters relevant to The Book of Mormon.

January 9: Have long felt bad for God in that the world mostly ignores Him, the Giver of All Good. I wished to be perfect, just to give Our Father and Our Redeemer a small rest in having one less stupid mortal to be weighed down by, but … I will keep trying.

January 17: Today's speaker told of an ancestral relative in 1899 in the Carolinas. He did not believe his relatives' Adventist leanings as the true church and he deeply wanted to know the truth and to find it. One day, while fishing he saw a vision of two men in coats and top hats and with a book that he understood contained the truth, and that those messengers of truth would come by the path of his house. He went home and sat in front of his house all day for three days, not wanting to miss them when they came by. On the third day he saw the two men in coats and top hats, and he told them he wanted to join

their church. They were surprised, but taught him. He joined and over time he was the means of bringing much of his family and many relatives into the church as well. The Lord knew him and knew what he would do, was the message.

Monday, Feb 8, 2016: 3 days ago, I could not find the folder with my check books and financial records for last year's taxes, etc. Important stuff! I looked for it every day, looked everywhere 2 or 3 times. Was sure it was in the bri-brary (my office). Today/Monday was looking one more time before going to the banks to have them print off all the stuff. After another half hour search, I prayed very sincerely (again). I looked again a place or two, then a small box fell down from the shelf above down onto my chair. I looked in it, and there it was; that is where I had put it. The only box and place I had not looked. Not sure I saw or noticed that box. I prayed thanks with moist gratitude

In April, Alan and I drove Mom and Dad to Uncle Don's funeral in California. One of the interesting stories happened in the early days of Don's mission to Holland. He had learned some basic Dutch, but did not yet understand very much of what was said. His companion had him do his first door approach. He knocked on the door, and a lady looked out the window from the 2nd floor. He said, "I am Elder VanNoy and we want to teach you about the Gospel of Jesus Christ." She hollered things back. He did not understand, but continued with his memorized lines, "We want to come back when your husband is home and teach you." She hollered some more. He thought it was going well. "Would Tuesday night be good?" He asked. She hollered some more. He answered, "Good, we'll see you Tuesday night." He started to walk away, but his companion was not in sight. He found him hiding behind the hedge. His companion asked, "Do you know what she was saying?" She was yelling 'no, no, no' in a variety of ways. But Uncle Don said, "Well, let's be there Tuesday night. We told them we would be there." So they went Tuesday night and the two were waiting for them, listened and were eventually baptized.

EARLY April Keiton was born.

April 13: Today I moved a mountain. A small one. My faith is only good for little ones. Okay, so I had to use a shovel and wheelbarrow! Moved 8 tons of dirt from the front street where the dump truck dumped it to the back yard for Sarah and Joe to plant lawn. Joe had to work all day, and suburb regulations insisted it be moved off the street that day, so I volunteered for the workout and moved 16,000 lbs in 82 trips, about 200 lbs per load, 30 shovels per barrow, 2460 shovels and 4 miles of walking, 2 of it half-lifting and pushing 200 lbs of dirt. I actually enjoyed the good workout and stretching beyond a usual day's doings. At day's end, I was pleasantly tired, took a shower, and did sleep well that night.

May 25: After two surgeries and tests, Silvia was declared cancer-free. A big relief!

In June we drove from Nevada to Pine, Arizona, where Silvia gave a good talk at Shana's stake girls camp. I met another cousin, Stephanie Greer, also descended from Richard and Ellender Wyer Stubbs. As we ate ice cream after some camp songs, Brother Greer and I talked about dangers that the old-timers lived through, like Ellender Wyer's dad who was wounded in the Revolutionary War and used to hunt wolves in the mountains to pay property taxes. Then when we get to the other side, the old-timers will ask us what we used to do in the mountains: "We sang songs and ate ice cream."

July 16: Another clear example of progressive subterfuge occurred this day. Silvia and I drove to Bluff, population 320, where Obama's Interior Secretary Sally Jewell was to hold a public meeting in pretense to hear local comment about Bears Ears. Silvia and I arrived 20 minutes early, yet the big tent, holding hundreds, was already full. We could not get in, could not hear the proceedings. These were not locals. There were 11 large buses parked in a line, which had transported into the event, outsiders numbering twice the population of Bluff. The nearby cars of us San Juan County locals brought maybe half that many people. We locals stood outside because outsiders were inside. This was staged to have hundreds of outsiders cheering on Jewell, who could pretend that the locals were overwhelmingly in enthusiastic support. If it really was for the good of the Native Americans, I could be in favor, but many Navajos and Utes know that it is not. They can get wood, gather herbs, and do all such now. Will they still be able to 40 years from now, after the bureaucracies do their modulations into ever increasing control as government tends to do? See the Constitution article in *Morsels for the Mind*.

I am not a fan of either party. I think poorly of many Republicans as well. I am a common-senser or thinker, not impressed with either party. Many Democrats are good people. The Dems of yester year were fairly reasonable, but the Dem leadership has progressively gone more progressive, radical, socialist, or worse. As I write this in 2024, the leading Dem is dumb. Harris is quite mixed up, anti-Constitutional, though the media megaphones drown out such facts to claim that the opponent is that way, but Trump has already been president 4 years, and he abides the Constitution much better than the last 3 Dems. Those who think January 6th was an attempted coup are listening to the deceitful voices who are bent on hiding many facts, suppressing film footage, and I have not time to write the book to explain thousands of things showing that many media megaphones are bent on deception. Three prominent former Dems—Tulsi Gabbard, Robert Kennedy, and Elon Musk—have changed parties to support the common-senser, because they have common sense. Furthermore, many other Dem thinkers speak of how it is becoming more difficult to support the new Dem irrationality. As for older Dems, who have a harder time changing, it is good not to judge them. I have some dear friends in town, who are persecuted, being called baby-killers for being Democrats and are hurt deeply. They do not deserve such treatment. They deserve respect and being treated kindly. I was saddened to hear that. We all have a few ideas in our heads needing adjustment, yet the Lord still loves us.

Aug 3: Drove from Blanding to Midway, from 2:30 to 8:30 a.m. to get Dad home from Heber hospital. That was a hard (and probably dangerous) middle-of-the-night drive, fighting sleep.

Aug 5: Presented at Fair Mormon conference at convention center 2 blocks west of new temple. It went well. Alan came. Saw lots of good people whom I had not seen for a while: Noel Reynolds, John Gee, Bob Smith, Dan Peterson, Jack Welch, Royal Skousen were there. Daniel C Peterson cited my research twice in the following week on his website and in a Deseret News article.

Oct: Jessica and Silvia went to Nevada. They with Sarah all went to "Time Out For Women." I stayed home, study-hiked and had some "Time Out for Man."

The last 2 or 3 years of Mom and Dad's lives, we kids took turns staying with them. Alan, in Mapleton, was closest and did a herculean effort for years, visiting them two or more evenings a week, checking on them, buying groceries, getting their mail, etc. However, Alan had a full-time job. Eric (Fallon, NV) and Rita (Cody, WY) both lived far away and did come some, but mainly Carrie (Rexburg, ID) and I (Four Corners, but retired) took turns staying alternate weeks when a full-time presence became needed. We were both 4 and 5 hours away, but not 9. When nearing 90, starting in 2015 or 2016 until their passing late 2017 and mid-2018, one of us was usually there. Watching my once capable, do-everything parents slide into needing lots of help was sobering, but the stays had upsides too. Between cooking meals, washing dishes and clothes, dispensing pills, digging weeds, taking out trash, buying groceries, going to P.O. for mail, and other errands, there was also free time for research, watching BYU and Jazz games with Mom, daily walks in the gorgeous scenery of Heber Valley's mountains behind Timpanogos, and enjoying their company. I also loved sleeping outside and breathing the delicious mountain air of Midway. I always loved sleeping in fresh air. Growing up, Eric and I slept outside on the flat garage roof all summer and fall, until it got cold. Even in winter, I would crack the bedroom window an inch to allow the cool fresh air to waft to my nostrils while snuggled in a warm blanket. While in Midway, I invented a wonderful winter sleeping bag. As a youngster on scout winter camping trips, not even the warmer "mummy" bags were warm enough, as I remember. But one Midway winter, I bought and put 3 nice warm fleece blankets on top of one another, then folded them lengthwise, and then bound the edges with binder clips every 8 inches along the bottom and 2/3 the way up the open side, to make a wonderfully warm winter sleeping bag. It was good down to about 5 degrees Fahrenheit. If the temperatures dipped to near zero or below, then I still got cold, but it worked well for 5 or above, the usual winter temps, and I preferred sleeping outside any time of year in Midway.

Sometime early in the 3rd millennium AD, the Blanding-Monticello Messiah orchestra was asked to go help the Moab orchestra with their performance of it. I drove my own car, arrived early, unsheathed my cello, and noticed they had 5 stands of 10 chairs for cellos. I knew my place and sat in the last chair,

seat 10. Only one other cellist was present by then and was sitting as first chair at the front. I began warming up and soon the first-chair cellist turned around, saw me, motioned and said, "come on up front here." I said, "That's okay; I belong here." She persisted inviting me to sit up front. I walked to the front and explained that I did not belong in 2nd chair, but she said that it didn't matter, that no one cared where they sat. So I sat down in 2nd chair and continued warming up. Soon 10 cellists filled the 10 chairs. Then the rather strong-personalitied Moab string teacher came to me and said in no uncertain terms, "Brian, you do not belong here. You go to that last chair and tell her to come up here." I walked with my cello to the last chair and said, "Lou said for us to trade, that you go up there and I sit here." The kind cellist said, "Oh, it's all okay. You go back up there. We don't care where we sit." I tried again to explain, but she was just being nice, said no one cared about placement, and encouraged me to go back up front. I looked at that only empty chair on the first stand, and knew that if I went back up front that Lou would either talk to me again or glare at me through the concert, and the nice 10th chair lady would not trade, so I walked to the instrument cases at the side of the gym, packed up my cello, and drove home. I had had it with being bossed by bossy women at that point in my life. I already had too much to do without being badgered into unnecessary extras. They did not need our help anyway; they had plenty of good cellists. Someone must have thought it would be a "nice idea" for us to help them. I am becoming weary of others' 'nice ideas' that really aren't necessary, but just extra filler in an already too full to-do list.

2017 March 6, I was nearly killed, spinning down the freeway on black ice west of Parley's Summit, on my way from Midway to SLC to pick up the just published copies of *Anecdotes as Antidotes to Wrench Us from Our Ruts*. The weather was clear in Midway 9 a.m. when I left Mom and Dad's place headed to Park City then SLC to pick up the boxes of books. Snow began falling thickly west of Park City, but it was melting on the road, it seemed. However, after passing the high point, going downhill westward, I hit black ice hidden by a half inch of new snow. Going 65 mph along with all the cars, I suddenly began fish-tailing. Turning into the direction of the skid, I corrected, but the tail swung the other direction, then the other with each correction. As the fish-tailing became ever wider, I then began spinning circles down the freeway. Not good! I thought it was over: I would either be killed, or injured, or best scenario, escape injury with a mangled car. I saw no hope of both me and the car coming out of a freeway spin without harm. In the going-backward part of each spin, I was looking at the oncoming cars coming my way, and luckily they must have seen my fish-tailing earlier and were all in process of slowing down. By the time I stopped, I was facing the oncoming cars, which had also stopped, and I stopped just short of hitting a cement wall on the right side. I restarted the Honda, pulled off to the right and let everyone pass, as I sat shaken and overwhelmed. I was choked up with grateful emotion for hours afterwards. Silvia felt that Joseph had helped me, which could well be. Some unseen someone must have. I did not see how myself and vehicle could both come through spinning down a freeway unscathed.

March 31, attended my first Southwest Indian Mission reunion since serving 50 years ago. Good to see Jimmy Benally, Dan Wheeler, Grant and Arlene Williams, Ron Barlow, Ima Jean Naranjo, etc.

April 17, drove to Midway to help Mom (90) and Dad (91), took Mom to the cancer doctor in Park City, and we learned good news, that her tests had come back negative—she did not have cancer. Joyful news, right! Then while driving the miles back to the house, Mom asked, "So now what do I die of?" I assured her that biology would figure out something.

Joyful news! Sarah and Joe and family moved to Blanding! Joe got a job as PA at UNHS.

I am not sure which summer it was, but one summer (3rd millennium) I was doing my usual study-hike in the mountains, walking the mountain roads reading my German Book of Mormon at the time when a couple came driving toward me. They stopped to ask me directions. I could tell by their accent that they were foreigners, which helped explain their being a little lost. After giving them directions, I asked where they were from. They were from Germany! I said, "The book I am reading is in German. Here, you have it. I have an extra at home." I told them a little about the book, and hoped that they would not hand the book back to me. Another time I gave away another German Book of Mormon to a

German-speaking young man cycling through. Twice Blanding people called me, Brother Hosler once and one of the Tibbitts boys another time, and asked if I had a Book of Mormon in Arabic. I did, had 3 or 4 of them, and provided them the books both times to give to their Arab friends passing through.

Years later, I was given the old letters of recommendation sent from my linguistics professors to CEU, when I applied for the CEU job. The internet critics howl against me when they know nothing about me. In contrast, those who ***do*** know me and know my abilities best, wrote the following:

Ray Freeze (May 27, 1981): Brian Stubbs has taken courses from me in linguistics here at the University of Utah. Brian is your man! He is mature, extremely responsible and has a really impressive analytical ability. He is friendly and a pleasure to work with. He is slightly reserved, an advantage, I believe, in the first years of teaching. His language background is impressive, his writing is clear, concise, and he shows much better than average ability to write educated English. One personal note—if it is possible, I would be pleased if he could be allowed some time to pursue his research interests. He is solid, methodical, and at the same time he has an eye for overall pattern. These attributes along with his others guarantee the quality of research he does.

David Iannucci (May 26, 1981): Mr. Stubbs has been a graduate student in our M.A. program and also the teaching assistant for our introductory course. In both settings, his performance has been outstanding. He is extremely bright, his analytical skills are superior, and he has a considerable ability to attack difficult problems with ease and insight. He is very quick in perceiving the crucial aspects of a complex issue and equally quick in coming to sophisticated solutions. He is also extremely hardworking, reliable and dedicated to his work. In sum, he is the kind of unusual student that one encounters only once in a few years.

Mauricio Mixco (May 22, 1981): I have nothing but the highest praise for Brian Stubbs, who is to receive his M.A. in linguistics here at the University of Utah. Mr. Stubbs demonstrates intellectual acuity, maturity of purpose, and an enormous capacity for responsibility for work. I recommend him unreservedly.

Perhaps like book ends of an academic life are the above letters of reference at the beginning and then 13 and 36 years later, two different editors of the *International Journal of American Linguistics* (the most prestigious journal for publishing comparative Native American research) both said (23 years apart) that I do good work, David Rood (in 1994) and Willem de Reuse (in 2017).

October was busy, as if other months are not. First, the cancer spot was taken off between my eyes, same place as Goliath's rock catcher. Just when I thought I could not get any uglier, I did. Those thinking I have a hole in my head are finally right. October 14, I did a presentation in Blanding. October 15, did a fireside for the Family History mission at BYU library. October 18, did a presentation for interested BYU-Idaho faculty. Then at the UA conference October 19-21, presented "Comparative Issues in UA" introducing how Semitic and Egyptian explain so many previous unexplainables in UA, the first that some had heard of the controversy. Then drove to Logan and did a stake fireside to a chapel full October 22, organized by John Vanderford and Todd Moon. Five major presentations in October. But such busy schedules are abruptly halted when a family death reminds us that we are all mortal.

November 1st, Dad passed away, almost 92, a good man and a good dad. At the funeral, I told 2 stories from his life. The spring of 1936 when Dad was 10 and his older brother Merlin was 14, they were doing the annual drive of the cattle up Provo Canyon from their Edgemont farm to the Charleston farm with summer grazing. They took turns on their horse Trixie and had a trusty dog helping them to do this 25-mile drive. In those days the turns were sharper and the road was narrower. One would stay back to wave down and warn cars that cattle were ahead and the other would do similarly in front. As Merlin led one car to clear a path through the cattle, the car had to stay close to Trixie or the cattle would again close the path. But the driver once stayed too close, his front bumper barely touched Trixie's hind leg, and Trixie jumped. Merlin flew off and landed face first on the metal guard rail, which fractured his jaw and nose, and cut him badly. Seeing Merlin's broken and badly bleeding face, the man felt terrible and decided he needed to take Merlin to the hospital. No ambulance or cell phone in those days.

Switching to Dad's own first-person account: the man told me, "Young man, I'm taking your brother to the hospital. You'll have to finish herding these cows up the canyon by yourself. Can you do that?" I did not answer, because I was not sure that I could. As the man drove away, I started to cry. Then another man drove by, not knowing what had just happened, and in a perturbed voice, yelled, "You'd better get these cows off the road before they get killed!" As a 10-year-old boy, alone and without my older brother's help, I felt helpless. In tears, I knelt down and prayed, as I had been taught in primary. After the prayer, I opened my eyes and saw the dog sitting in front of me and felt impressed that that dog was the answer to my prayer. By then the cows had scattered in all directions, but I motioned the dog to go left and round them in, and it did exactly as directed. Now on Trixie, I also pulled the herd together as best I could, then sent the dog other directions to pull them in from those places also. The dog obeyed exactly as directed, and we eventually found and gathered all the cows. I pointed at a spot for the dog to stay at the back of the herd a certain distance, which instruction it understood and obeyed, while I stayed in front on Trixie. I was worried about being late and out on the dangerous road after dark, which made everything even more dangerous. So I tried hurrying the cows, but cows are not keen on hurry, so we did arrive late after dark.

Orlin was expecting us at the Charleston farm, and opened the gate as the cows approached, and called out into the dark, "Merlin! Darrel!" But I was the only one who answered. "Where's Merlin?" he asked. I explained the whole matter to him, after which he rather incredulously asked, "So you herded these cows up the canyon all by yourself?" I was pleased to say that I had.

Merlin was never the same again. He always had asthma very bad, and this added other health problems. His death at 53 is consistent with his life of poor health.

At ages 18 and 19, Dad was serving in the Army in WWII in Italy. Again, let his own first-person account tell his story: "After arriving in Italy, we did some strenuous training in the snow-covered Apennine Mountain range and many long marches with full field gear. The Italians in various areas were in difficult circumstances, because the Germans had passed through earlier, had taken their livestock, much of their food, and generally wiped the people clean of edible resources. Many were hungry. One time children stood a distance away, watching us soldiers eat our rations. After a while it became apparent that these children were desperately hungry, and we soldiers shared our food with the children.

In March we sailed to a base north of Florence, Italy. Winter time was something of an enforced weather truce, because the mud makes travel difficult for vehicles. However, it was known that as soon as spring came and the roads became usable, that action from the German Army would soon follow. During these winter weeks of training and waiting, I one time walked the streets of Florence and chanced upon an Army Band performing an outdoor concert. I noticed a soldier playing oboe. After the performance, I talked with the soldier oboist and told him that he and I shared the problems of that ornery instrument. He asked me if I would be interested in replacing him in the band. I exclaimed, "Would I ever!" He explained that he was leaving the next day and, if interested, I should talk to Warrant Officer Frost, the director of the band. I talked with the officer. He looked at me askance and asked, "Have you ever heard of Marcel Tabuteau?" "I certainly have," I said. Then I told him my experience of listening to Tabuteau in concert, and talking with him afterwards. I answered his other questions. He knew I was an oboist and told me what I should do, whom to talk to, etc. I was soon transferred from the infantry to the band. One of my first appearances with the band was to dedicate the Florence American (military) Cemetery about 8 miles south of Florence, Italy, near the end of April 1945. As expected, intense war had resumed, but not many days later, one could hear that the large cannons had ceased firing. Then came the explanation: the German Army was surrendering on the Italian front.

Thirty-five years later in 1980, Eva and I did a summer vacation in Europe. We rented a car and traveled Europe for a month. I wanted to see Florence, Italy, and spend a day in the De Medici Palaces. When we arrived, the palaces were closed. We had to keep going, so we went south. As we turned to the west, I suddenly recognized the topography. Then a "Military Cemetery" sign appeared. This was the same cemetery which my band had dedicated 35 years earlier! I was tired from driving, so I walked

around the cemetery awhile. It was a huge cemetery, over 4,000 dead. As I walked in, I had an eerie feeling, and then it dawned on me that this part of the cemetery was dedicated to the infantry battalion that I was a member of 35 years earlier. I recognized the names of the slain soldiers—my fellow infantrymen. Much of the battalion was wiped out just days after I had been transferred out of it, and just days before the war's end! I was crying and deeply stunned, as though it had happened yesterday. The soldier who replaced me had been killed. The older buddy, who had tried to persuade me out of sharpshooter status so that I would have a better chance to stay alive—he had also been killed. Could I have traded places with him at that moment, I would have. But then I remembered asking the Lord to let me come home alive. He had answered my prayer. I was indeed a very lucky soldier to come home alive without injury."

2018 began with a Ron Eberling fireside. I came home and wrote some in my journal:

Jan 15, 2018: Family night at the Wilcox house; Ron Eberling told bits of his amazing life story. Raised rough and tough on ranches near Ajo, AZ, and Mancos, CO. Lived by the Mancos River some of the time, had no running water, no electricity, drank from the river, bathed in the river, hauled water from the river. Like his dad, he also grew up a fighter, 2-minute half-miler, just tough. Born in 1948, near my same age, but a good heart that the Lord had things in store for. He told much about his dad first. His dad fought in WWII, was the only survivor of his platoon on D-Day, by grabbing a dead soldier and carrying him over his head to protect himself as he ran out of the water toward the cliffs, climbed the cliffs, found the next unit. Later in Europe, after weeks of K-rations, General George Patten had them in line for a Thanksgiving dinner when 3 German planes came gunning down the line of soldiers. While others ran for cover under trucks, Dad Eberling hopped on a machine-gun jeep, thinking 'you can kill me tomorrow, but I'm having Thanksgiving dinner today'. He didn't hide but fired his machine gun at the 3 planes coming low right down the line. He shot 2 down that crashed in the field behind and the 3rd flew away smoking. He fought in the Battle of the Bulge and much else. He married a French girl and bought ranches in AZ and later in CO, and Ron was their 2nd of 3 children.

I'll relate just one of several experiences, typifying his young life. As a 16-year-old in southern CO, Ron and his dad were clearing / bulldozing land, and when he and his dad came back from the store, their employee said "that man over there (neighbor) said he'd shoot me if I keep clearing." Ron's Dad told him, "Start up the dozer and keep dozing, and Ron and I will go deal with them." That neighbor had a 26-year-old son. Dad asked Ron, "If necessary, can you take the boy, and I'll handle the dad?" Ron said, "yeah, I can handle him." So they arrive at the house, knock on the door, and the neighbor and 3 men come out, each with a gun in hand; 2 of them had just gotten out of prison for killing a policeman. Ron's dad tells Ron, "Go to the truck, get the 30-30, and you shoot whichever one shoots me first." So Ron hurries to the truck, was just pulling the 30-30 from the truck and KABOOM! The son had shot a shotgun at the ground in front Ron, and splattered gravel and dirt all over him and in his eyes and it knocked him back. Ron was temporarily blinded, was feeling for or trying to find the gun on the ground, couldn't see. Shortly he felt his dad's hand pick him up by the collar and throw him in the truck, then they sped off. He regained some sight and glanced back and saw them bloodied. As they drove back to the dozer, Ron asked his dad what happened. His dad said, "When the boy shot at you, all eyes looked toward him, and I pulled out the chain in my back pocket and leveled them and beat them with it, then hurried to our truck while they gathered themselves up." By the time the police came, those neighbors had fled the house and state, never to be seen again.

Thereafter, Ron was introduced to the LDS Church, and with time wanted to join the Church. When he told his parents, his dad said, "That's fine; you can pack your things and move out." So he did. He knew how to work, run heavy equipment, and do lots of things, and was earning his own way as he finished high school. After a year, his dad invited him back to help him with the work, and Dad gave him Sundays off to go to Church. Ron got a patriarchal blessing that mentioned a mission and genealogy. He didn't see how either was possible. However, he was called to France, where his mother was from. He decided he would open his mouth and not fear man, as the scripture said.

One Saturday evening he was handing out pamphlets as his senior companion taught on the boardwalk by the sea. An anti began yelling at his companion all the usual falsehoods about Joseph Smith and the Church. The commotion drew a large crowd, but his companion was not saying much in the Church's defense. Ron then got on another box and began talking and perfect French flowed out of him, explaining away the falsehoods. He taught till midnight as his companion handed out the pamphlets, telling where church was the next Sunday morning. The next morning they filled the place where they met, and eventually baptized 3 families from that crowd.

He worked hard and brought many into the church. Because of his French Mom, he had dual citizenship in France and the U.S. He was put in jail for draft-dodging from a draft order into the French army. He was put in dark isolation for some days as the Church tried to get him out. Somehow the church did get him out and got him into Switzerland to finish his mission there.

In Switzerland he was sent to a village in the mountains, deep snow in winter. The branch had only a few 80-year-old members. The mission president told him to tract every house, and if nothing happens, they'd close the area. They did so twice and at one point the 3rd time through, he was told to turn around, and was guided each turn to a specific apartment. They knocked. A lady did not let them in at first, but did eventually. Turns out she was just about to end her life. Her husband had left her and her child had died, and she had lost hope. They taught her and she was baptized. She also became a great help in bringing others into the church. An evil force tried to destroy him one night, pressing his body and throat to be unable to breath, but the priesthood sent it away. On his way home from his mission, he stopped in the French village to visit his grandparents and aunts and uncles, a wonderful week.

He married, but couldn't make any progress in his Dad's genealogy. Ron and Janice had a 3-year-old daughter at the time. She was in her room, looking up, telling her Dad about the man talking with her. Ron could see no one, was not sure what to think of it, told her that they needed to go. They went to dinner and came back. Before bed, their daughter came back and gave her Dad a big hug and kisses, and told him that she was going home. He said, "You are home." She smiled and went to her room. The mother checked on her an hour later and she was deceased, though as healthy as can be an hour earlier. Soon thereafter, he got a letter from someone telling him where all his Dad's family's information was, generations back. That daughter seemed the key to opening up things for those lines of ancestors. A good man with a strong will to do right, once he found the right, and the Lord through him and leading him, did an amazing life. These are only a few of Ron Eberling's stories, whose life is another witness of God's hand in the lives of those who try to abide in Him.

In February we stayed with the AZ grandchildren, treated Knights to a buffet one day and treated the Browns to a buffet the next day. But for me, two buffet two days in a row—not a good idea! I got a bad case of pleurisy, an inflammation of the lining between lung and ribcage. It was painful to lie down, and I had a hard time sleeping.

Feb 16: While driving from Phoenix to Blanding, I decided to eat less and live. Got home late afternoon, and after fasting 30 hours since noon the day before, I ate a little. The pain returned a little after eating, but not bad. In the evening ate some more; the pain grew worse.

Feb 17: Woke up 4 a.m., could not sleep with the nagging pain. I study-walked 4 or 5 miles, and the longer I walked, the better I felt, until the pain was nearly gone. Got home, cooked a bowl of wheat mush, ate it, and now feel the best I have felt in 4 days.

Feb 21: drove to Midway to relieve Carrie and stay with Mom two weeks. A few days later had another flare-up of pleurisy, painful to sit up, down, or lie down and get up. Next day the pains were worse. That night slept little, 10:30-12 and again 3-4, paced most of the night. Standing and walking slowly was the only pain-free position. After 2 nights of little sleep, I was so tired. Hard to breathe, could not breathe deep to cough up phlegm. Got a taste of how awful it would be to die of cannot-breathe diseases. Getting out of a recliner, I could not help but scream in pain, and same in getting in or out of bed, shrieking now and then through the day. Mom was concerned. I am supposed to be taking care of

her, not her me, but I explained it only hurts in certain movements. I finally went to the Dr, told him that I thought I had pleurisy, he checked me, agreed, and gave me something, and I started feeling better.

March 2: pain 80% gone. After pain, merely existing pain-free is so much fun.

March 7: Returned from Midway. 95% better, but not all.

March 12: Hiked near the San Juan River with Kline Carroll and Ron McDonald. I was very weak and after 2 hours, I went back to the car to rest while they continued the hike. When I arrived home, I probably slept 30 of the next 36 hours over a day and a half.

March 14: I went to see Dr Joseph Walker. He took a chest x-ray and did blood tests. Blood tests good, but X-ray showed atelectasis—a few small spots of collapsed lung. Started antibiotics.

March 18: 4th day of anti-lifes. But I am getting better, and it feels good to walk again. That bout with pleurisy lasted a month and a half, and I include it as a significant learning experience—to appreciate good health, the joy of being pain-free most of life, the luxury of being able to sleep, the lesson to not eat so much—a worthwhile lesson because I do not get sick very often.

April 4: Drove 320 miles to SLC, and Silvia was declared cancer free, does not have to go back.

April 5-7, Thursday-Saturday: Firm Foundation Expo in Layton, next to Stubbs Dental. Th and Sat I presented to about 50 people each time. Not concerned with who or how many are interested any more. Let whoever figure it out whenever. I will simply make the case available. Went to some other interesting presentations. Met Avraham Gileadi, traded books with him, sold 18 books. Best of all was listening to Lynn Ridenhour, a Baptist preacher testifying of the truth of the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith as a prophet. A friend gave him a copy, but he was indoctrinated against it, so started to read to prove it wrong to his friend, but as he read the Book of Mormon, he knew it was true. He wrote his story in his book *Sir, That's a Book of Mormon*, by Lynn Ridenhour. I bought a copy, a great read.

June, early summer, Christian was born, but only hours after birth, he began turning blue, so he was life-flighted to Grand Junction med center with lung infections. It took a few days, but he got better.

July, enroute back to Blanding, I attended fast and testimony meeting at the Charleston chapel. Maybe I have read too many books and accounts of those experiencing the other side and returning to tell about the joy, peace, and love they experience, because sometimes I sigh in wondering how much longer. Of late, weighed down enough that I find myself frequently looking forward to yonder's rest from the mortal woes and rat race and burdens, harassments, and trivial hecticness. But as I listened to people dealing with burdens, I realized that everyone has burdens, sometimes tough ones! And that it is during this life that people need the most help. The previous eons in Heaven were heaven. The coming rest for the righteous will be sublime, a wonderful rest enveloped in peace and love. But this brief mortal battle is the battle, the toughest times for everyone. Everyone is weighed with cares, overwhelmed by burdens at times, beset by deceptive voices, misled by false information. It is in this life that God's children need the most help. Why would I want to be anywhere else? I suddenly felt glad to be here, to be on earth with the opportunity and privilege of helping as many as I can in what ways I can, to do what only mortals can do for each other. Why would I want to be removed from the battle as my brothers and sisters and family struggle in the fight, struggle with rotating burdens? I want to help, to help people solve problems, to help bear burdens when not immediately solvable, to help others realize their potential, to help many become what they can become, to teach, gently point a better way, encourage turning to the Great Solver of All Problems, and help people find the life that solves or prevents most problems, though not all for anyone. I came away with a new optimism and a greater love for my fellow mortals, and a greater desire to help.

Mid-July, it was again my turn staying with Mom. Her health worker came to the house, tested Mom, potassium was up, must go to the hospital. Heber hospital did not have what was needed, so they took her to the Provo hospital. I drove behind, following the ambulance. They had to put a tube in her jugular vein to infuse whatever. I slept on a little corner couch in the same room 4 days and nights. When they stood her up after 4 days in bed, she could not walk. She walked fine before the hospitalization, but after 4 days in bed, she could no longer walk. Later she was moved to a resting facility in Springville. At that point Sheila came to be with her grandma some days. Alan and someone else were also there when—

July 30, 2018, Mom passed away. My remarks included, "We are all on the same conveyor belt of time, going the same direction, taking our separate turns falling over the edge." I also quoted Andrea: "I came to Utah because of my Uncle Darrel; I stayed in Utah because of my Aunt Eva. She may be genuinely the most selfless, honest, and kind person I have ever known." Other talks said similarly. Silvia also spoke, because Mom wanted her to. I spoke last and explained that Silvia became the daughter and I the son-in-law, because of things like the fact that Silvia would call Mom quite regularly, once or twice a month, just to talk and see how she was doing, whereas I called her once a year, on Mother's Day.

By the time I finished caring for the old, I was old myself, turning 70 a year later. But that is okay. I am glad to have spent time with Mom and Dad their last years in Midway—a beautiful peaceful place.

This summer, Jorma built Sarah and Joe's house. I helped with insulation, but not on the roof!

August 19: Today a renewed interest to serve my Silvia well and make her as happy as possible, in this otherwise toil-filled and rather dreary life (with me).

After all of us siblings had helped sort Mom and Dad's house contents off and on through August, in early September Silvia and I spent 10 or 12 days finishing the sorting. Silvia sorted and I hauled perhaps 20 pickup loads to the dump. At the end of one of those days, I was so tired I could hardly walk; putting one foot in front of the other was an effort. Collapsed and slept well every night. But we finished.

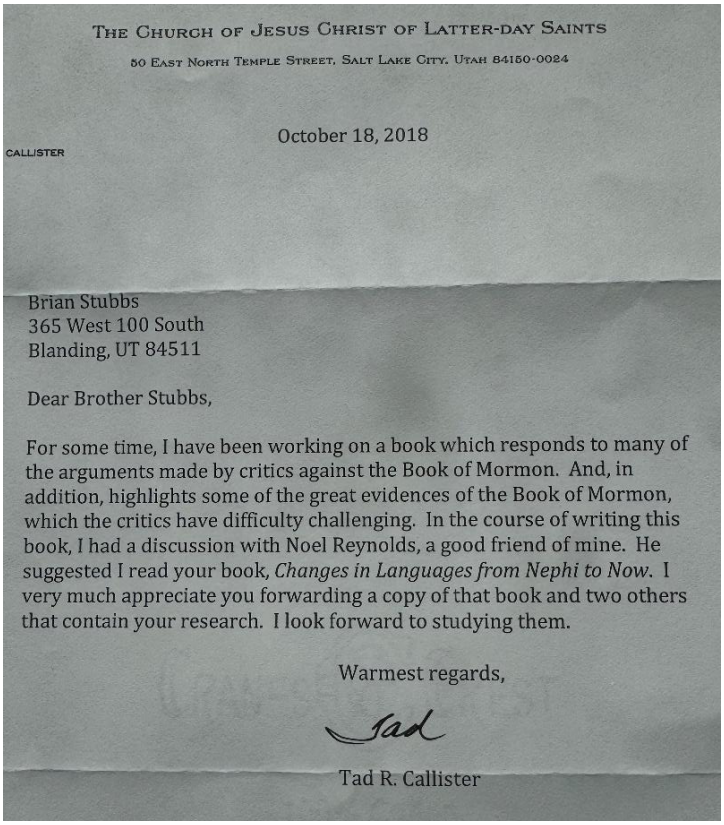
A year plus ago, I sent Deseret Book a copy of *Changes in Languages*, already published, all they had to do was put it on their shelves. After weeks, a Deseret Book editor emailed me and said they would not sell my book. "The title would not sell," he said. So that must mean that Deseret Book readers **DO** judge a book by its cover. Mine costs much less than their other books. I just got an email advertising what they do sell. Half of the titles are fine, but listen to these:

Kiss of the Spindle. Is the spindle doing the kissing or being kissed, and who would want to be involved?
Anymore. Any more of what? May as well name a book "The"!
Perfect Set. Not even 'the' in front of it. Have no idea what that might be about!
Certain Women. Loaded!
One Candle. And the front-cover pictures of none of these even help.
Unforgettable. Both the title and cover seem quite forgettable. What's unforgettable? A person? A summer? A vacation? An event?

Of course, the titles would be clear when reading the book, but none of those titles would make me want to buy it. Titles seem nigh unto nonsense. My book's subject matter at least is clear from the title. *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now* means that it has to do with Book of Mormon language matters. Of course, that topic itself would not interest all people, but it **does** interest many people.

I chuckle when some BYU people think only publishing with a major publishing company counts! Many look down on self-publishing. Yet publishers need to publish what will make them money. No one can blame them. That is how they earn their living. However, what is of value to mankind or an important addition to our collective knowledge—those are not on their radar unless sizable numbers would buy it to make money, so for topics that may not sell a lot (like Uto-Aztecan), but are important, self-publishing is a good route, if not the best or only route. It costs less and it skips the headache of trying to find a publisher willing to lose money. My recent publications of 2500 copies only cost $3 each. Giving my books to interested persons costs no more than giving away candy bars! The Book of Mormon was self-published. Martin Harris had to put up the money. The publisher was not going to risk a lack of receipts after publishing it. And it never did sell well. Most copies were given away, like mine, and Martin lost the farm. The Book of Mormon was important enough to lose money over.

But many people appreciate the work, many linguists and others, as apparent in this letter from Tad R. Callister, of the Seventy:



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

50 EAST NORTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-0024

October 18, 2018

CALLISTER

Brian Stubbs
365 West 100 South
Blanding, UT 84511

Dear Brother Stubbs,

For some time, I have been working on a book which responds to many of the arguments made by critics against the Book of Mormon. And, in addition, highlights some of the great evidences of the Book of Mormon, which the critics have difficulty challenging. In the course of writing this book, I had a discussion with Noel Reynolds, a good friend of mine. He suggested I read your book, *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*. I very much appreciate you forwarding a copy of that book and two others that contain your research. I look forward to studying them.

Warmest regards,

Tad

Tad R. Callister

2019, February 6, Silvia had knee-replacement surgery. February 9, I brought her home from the hospital to a severe drop in quality of care, to me instead of a fleet of nurses. It was extremely painful for most of the month, but the eventual recovery did have the knee working better and with much less pain. Poor Silvia has been through a dozen surgeries or so, 5 of them C-sections.

In March was Uncle Bob's funeral—a very good man. Poor Uncle Bob was born with a cleft lip, and in those days, the art of repair was not what it is today. He was teased and bullied mercilessly for years, even into the Navy where he served as a communication technician in the Pacific during WWII. His childhood peers in the Church treated him badly, so he did not have good feelings toward the Church. He had gone to elementary school with Russell M. Nelson, now the prophet, who did not do anything specifically himself, though Uncle Bob saw him as part of that crowd and spoke unfavorably of "those boys." So my cousin, John, confident in the prophet's goodness and that an exchange in later life would be helpful, contacted and emailed someone in those realms concerning his father. A kind, understanding letter from President Nelson came back, and said something like, "Dear Bob, I apologize for anything I may have said or done that was taken negatively. I only remember good and pleasant memories from our childhood years. But none of us General Authorities are perfect; we are all human with mortal imperfections, and if you remember anything ill of me, I apologize to you and feel to bless you."

Uncle Bob read that letter, thought about it a while and then said, "I am deeply embarrassed and ashamed that I ever said anything bad about him or the Church. Russell Nelson was good to me, and I will never say another negative remark about him or the Church or any of its leaders. They are all good men doing a good job of a hard job." That is a wonderful story, of two great men, in my opinion. That was the beginning of Uncle Bob's softening and return to activity in his mid-80s, started paying a full tithe, and went to the temple at age 87 and was sealed to his wife, my Aunt Nila.

One of my Lee cousins cited a great quote from Daniel J. Boorstin: "The greatest obstacle to discovery is not ignorance—it is the illusion of knowledge." So many suppose they know, when in reality we all know near zero compared to what God knows. So to resist His knowledge (scriptures) that God sends down to us weak witless wayward wanderers in the wasteland of illusions of knowledge is foolishness, yet most of the world are content in their illusion of knowledge that prevents finding truth or even desiring it enough to search a little. The arguments against Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon do not hold water. Most are false, and others are explainable or need balanced perspective. They claim Joseph was an uneducated imposter; he was uneducated, but brilliant and tutored by angels: it would be impossible for an imposter to get several hundred facts correct that were not known in Joseph's day, but which have been discovered in the 200 years since, and on and on. For example, Nahom has been found and its name is written in stone. But opponents prefer contentment in their illusion of thinking they know and are not interested in hearing all the facts now available that proves the Book of Mormon true and

Joseph Smith a prophet; e.g., how does Joseph Smith get dozens of prophecies correct, happening long after he is dead, entirely out of his control, if he is not a prophet?

Finally, I am old! In April, turned 70! Yes! I have waited so long. I thought of making a T-shirt that says: "I'm Old. Be nice to me now." Finally. I can say, "I'm old; leave me alone. Not so many assignments. Put me out to pasture. The Rocky Mountains are my pasture … with my books."

Enjoyed a gathering of cousins. My cousin Ranae's husband, Lance, told some inspiring stories from his service in Vietnam. After getting orders to Vietnam, he wanted a blessing before leaving. LeGrande Richards blessed him, that if he would live the church standards, he would return unharmed. For a year, he flew helicopters subject to enemy fire almost daily, but not even his helicopter ever got a bullet hole, though the other helicopters in those missions were usually hit. Lance's reputation was, "Lance's copter is never hit; get in his helicopter." Once a co-pilot said, "I have seen tracer bullets coming at me in a copter and the copter gets hit. But when riding with Lance, the tracer bullets were coming straight for us, but would veer off. Bullets do not act like that." I cannot remember all the stories.

June 17: finished revising "Comparative Issues in UA" and emailed it to the 35 best UA scholars for them to read, inasmuch as I will not be attending the UA conf in Mexico next week.

July 10 was Uncle Morris Gardner's funeral. Reed told of being teased for his stuttering until age 14, when he read the Book of Mormon all the way through out loud to himself, and by the time he finished, he no longer had a stutter. Uncle Morris had epilepsy when young, was once in a coma 3 days. His Mom prayed that if God would heal him, she would see that he gets to church every Sunday. Distance and circumstances made it difficult to get there, but she kept her promise and his epilepsy ceased.

Nov 4: A cartel murdered 5 of my cousins of Rhonita's family and 4 were of a Langford family. The 3 women and 6 children murdered in Mexico were driving to a wedding. The mother Maria Rhonita Miller and her children are Rhonita's descendants. A cruel world at times.

Dec 22: Today Sunday, we did the Christmas program at White Mesa branch, 69 in attendance, though our family were 1/3 of that number. Kia and I did Away in a Manger, then Shana, Kia, Aisha, Packer did Pachelbel, and Kia did her Christmas song medley and Aisha did a cello solo, Siah a vocal solo, and then Julia, Jace, Cienna sang, then we all sang. Malin, Justi, Packer did sacrament.

As I watched and listened to my children and grandchildren doing their music and the sacrament, I was so impressed with each one and pleased with their good efforts in life. My heart swelled with joy in them. Then came to mind the phrase: that they might have joy and rejoicing in their posterity. Yes, it happens. As challenging as the child-rearing years might be at times and the joys hard to find or not so frequent amidst tantrums, diapers, and discipline, the joys gradually increase with time. I could not help but think what wonderful children and grandchildren I have, not so much from my efforts as perhaps from their mothers' faithfulness, Heavenly Father's help, and what they are innately themselves, regardless our efforts. I felt joy and rejoicing in my posterity, which likely grows greater with time, through all eternity.

We enjoyed that 4th time at White Mesa Branch. Jed Tate is a good branch president. He loves and works hard for those people, his wife Patricia ever helping. We enjoyed working with Shane and Merri Shumway, Dan and Heather Raisor, Decker, Nicole and Saylor Perkins, Aldean and Wanda Ketchum, the Mustache and John families, Janet Ketchum, Thelma, etc. We served under Oris Black in the 70s, under Keith Langston and Stan Bronson in the 90s, and Jed Tate 25 years later 2019-20—four times in 50 years.

2020 Feb 2: Every now and then I see the latest style in jeans—holes in the pants on purpose or faded spots, so as to look old. When I was young, the style was new crisp-looking jeans. If fading or holes happened, they were patched or replaced. Only we rowdy unfashionable boys kept wearing old jeans with holes from playing football or marbles on our knees, hauling hay or wrestling. And now that look is on the racks at the fashion stores. How times have changed! On the bright side, now that old and worn out are in, I'm right in style. I'm old and worn out! Finally, I fit in—way up in the fashion world. What? You say, I'm still not in style? I don't walk like the cool kids? I need a spry energetic stride instead of my tired-looking shuffle? I used to have a quick stride … back when the rest of me had not yet reached

the pinnacle of stylishness. Okay, actually, I did not really want to be in style anyway. I have more important things to do. It is quite an unnecessary stress and headache to worry about fashion. What a relief that I only spent a brief moment being caught up in the heights of the fashion world, before quickly escaping the waste in worry and drain on emotion! 'Tis so relaxing to be unconcerned about style!

March 12: Silvia and I loaded the car with the meal, books, genealogy materials, etc, went to the White Mesa chapel, carried everything inside, and while we were setting up for the weekly Book of Mormon reading and genealogy session, we learned that an email had been sent churchwide that all church meetings are cancelled until further notice due to coronavirus. We put a sign on the door, loaded our stuff back in the car, and drove home. **Covid had begun**, the national impact about to unfold.

March 18: Silvia and I—a pair of old people by definition, appearance, gate, energy-levels, and productivity—are self-quarantined in the house due to the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. I am good with it, have gotten a lot done: finished two articles and finished revisions for the 2nd edition of *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*, sent it to the publisher, and it should be coming out soon. Like Jorma said (who has spent his life working out in the weather, cold, heat, or blizzard, and is weary of answering passer-by questions while he works): "I've been waiting all my life to be told to stay home and avoid crowds." Yet it is also a hardship on many, financially or health-wise.

April 27: Turned 71 recently. Silvia and daughters announced the birthday on Facebook. I am not on FB, so they forwarded the responses to me. The kindnesses left me moved and pleasantly surprised:
Sarah: Happy Birthday to one of the most loving, kind, smart, and patient souls! I'm beyond lucky to call him Dad. Growing up he never yelled at me. Not once. I love you, Dad!
Jessica: Happy bd to the best dad around! He truly is one of the most gentle and humble men I know. Truly, I have been born of goodly parents.
Sheila: For my dad's bd and for those benefitted from his genuine hugs, I want to share a tender story on when I think he became the best hugger. When our family was standing in the viewing line with our dear son and brother resting in his casket next to us, we received the love and hugs of what felt like thousands to my 12-year-old perspective. Perhaps my dad could see I was getting tired and was attempting to divert my thoughts. Or perhaps he tenderly was seeing the power of cumulative hugs in action. But he leaned over to me and said, "I wonder if Joseph had received all these hugs if he would have chosen what he did." I do believe the thousands of hugs we received that day have been passed forward through my dad's strong unconditional embrace offered often.
Shana: I'm grateful you are my dad. You are so simple and so wise at the same time. Every year I live, I realize the value of being tutored by your example all of my life. I love you so much Dad. Thank you!
Alan (brother): I know of none better at the combination of brilliance and humility. I look up to you. I have great admiration and respect for all you have accomplished, and more important, who you have become.
Carrie (sister): I ditto Alan, and have a memory of Brian and Silvia coming home from the Temple to Mom and Dad's house and him shaking my hand and feeling the love of the Savior.
Karen Crane (cousin): Happy bd dear cousin. So glad we're related.
Claudia Orr: Happy bd to one of the best men I have ever known.
Gina Hatch: Happy bd to one of the smartest men I know.
Jennie Morris: Happy bd to a very kind and good friend.
Heidi Helquist Swenson: Your dad is so awesome. Happy bd my dear friend.
Trudy Shearer: Happy bd to one of the greatest men I know.
Patti Palmer Porter: Happy bd Brian. You are all those and more.
Celinda Palmer (cousin): Happy bd! Yes, a wonderful man.
Cristie Gardner (cousin): Happy bd to a great guy and wonderfully brilliant cousin!
Amy Watkins Kensley: I absolutely LOVE your parents—such wonderful people.
Deniane Gutke Kartchner: This is awesome. We sure love him! Happy bd Brian!
Shannon Edgerton: Happy bd Brother Stubbs!!! Hugs are awesome.

Eileen Davis: Your dad made a difference in my life.
LeeAnn Numbers Parker: They don't come any better than Brian Stubbs—I have never seen him act anything less than saintly—the Parker Family all love him!
Jonna Meyer: Brian has made a difference in my life!
Jen Robertson Ralston: I've always heard the best things about him from my dad (Dr. John Robertson).
Cheryl Bowers: Your dad is one of the best. Happiest bd!!

May 6: Shaved my 6-week, one-inch covid beard. Figured I'm ugly enough all by myself without an ugly white beard making me look even worse. Two days later Silvia noticed I had shaved.
May 8: Today I arrived at a deeper appreciation for Silvia—how much she has gone through, a seemingly endless series of sorrows, not always appreciated by her husband as much as merited, yet through all the burdens ever trying to do others good. Her stature in Heaven will surprise many.

Also in 2020, I published the 2nd edition of *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*, this time with endorsements on back by John Robertson (Harvard PhD, Mayan scholar, retired chair of BYU Linguistics Dept, and the church's best historical linguist); Noel Reynolds (former BYU Vice-President and Book-of-Mormon scholar); David Calabro (a young brilliant scholar in several Semitic languages and Egyptian); and this montage of Amazon customer reviews of the 1st edition: spell-binding, a fantastic little book, a real treat to read, am on my third reading, very original and important work, fascinating study, intriguing, I highly recommend this book. Their words.

In contrast to those valuing the work (all linguists who read it), we can expect transoceanic, pro-Restoration discoveries to be controversial. A few negative voices had surfaced by 2020. In response to those, my article "Answering the Critics in 44 Rebuttal Points" was published on the *Interpreter Foundation* website. Its backstory is that in 2019, a new BYU linguist, Chris Rogers, seemed to delight in attempting to discredit my work as flawed, using surprisingly derogatory language, in an article published in the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, no less, in which journal I had published 3 articles 20 years earlier with thumbs up from BYU's best historical linguist (Robertson) and Semitist (Ricks). Rogers misassumed so many things in his inaccurate accusations, claiming that I assumed many things, so a swift response was needed. Correcting him in the next issue of the annual journal a year away would not do: cannot let such false and pretended scholarship stand unanswered for a year. In addition, the editor did not want me to write that long of an article, yet it would have to be a long article to explain how wrong Rogers was. So I wrote an email of several pages explaining Rogers' errors, and emailed it to perhaps 40 BYU linguists, Hebrew, Arabic, other language scholars, and other relevant scholars. I hear it created quite a stir at BYU. All I heard was favorable comment, solidly on my side. Only Rogers answered otherwise, calling my mass email unethical. Unethical? Not nearly as unethical as his twisting and misrepresenting what I had said in my books! How else do I get word out to only a fraction of all who might read his unethical treatment of my work in the journal?

A year later, Daniel Peterson, a superb Arabist and Book of Mormon scholar, invited me to write an article in response to the critics for his *Interpreter* website. Using the mass email as a starting draft, I wrote and Peterson published "Answering the Critics in 44 Rebuttal Points" presently on *The Interpreter* website. Good comments came from the best brains; a few follow. The first 3 are excellent linguists.
John Robertson (linguist): I just read every word of Stubbs's article. I am so glad it has been published. It is good that he responded to Rogers and Hansen, but I think his total command of method, languages, skill of argumentation reveals a mind of an exceptional capacity of intellect. Beyond that, forty years of intense work shines through. The data that he presents cover the waterfront. Admittedly, what he wrote is hardly available to the layperson, or to the majority of linguists I know, for that matter.
Royal Skousen (linguist): I read through your contribution on the Stubbs-Rogers-Hansen debate. You have done well. Persist. Time is on your side. … You have a lot of knowledge under your belt. I was amazed by your showmanship.

Kerry Hull (linguist): Wow, that was a great read. Your response to Rogers was excellent. But your detailed discussion of Hansen's critique was very persuasive and struck the right tone. … you also showed how well you know the subject through your careful discussion of those data. It was very convincing, and the honest approach that came through the article is a big plus.
Tim Ernst: Brian has done an admirable job of taking his critics' criticism and using it to actually bolster his original thesis. I had to laugh when he mentioned, "Rogers' and Hansen's investigations together eliminated one item, maybe two, leaving 1,526 matches" with the promise that additional matches would be forthcoming. [1657 matches came forth in 2nd edition, 2023.]

The tone of Chris Rogers' article was quite derogatory, but afterwards, I heard no more criticisms from him. Magnus Pharao Hansen (linguist of Copenhagen, Denmark), on the other hand, was more moderate initially, but became more unreasonable and belligerent later. After I read the article by Magnus Pharao Hansen (MPH), which questioned 14 of my Nahua inclusions, I emailed him an amiable email, saying that he was right on one, maybe two, and I also explained in some detail how the data appeared to support my view on the other 12, and I suggested that we have the back-and-forth discussion on his website so that all his followers could read it, who had already read his criticisms of me. But he said, if so, he did not want me to include much data, only some kind of narrative. Well, when discussing data, one must include the data under discussion. I fully admitted that he was right and I wrong on one item, and maybe a second, but that means that 12 of the 14 were reasonable. But if he did not want the discussion on his website, then I should do so elsewhere, so when Dan Peterson invited me to publish a response in *The Interpreter*—perfect! Yet when it appeared months after MPH's and my exchanges of emails, MPH was very upset that I had published views contrary to his in another place. What did he expect if he would not allow the data and discussions on his website? Did he think I should ask his permission? I was cordial and polite in tone, but my simply disagreeing with him upset him. He asked why I would go to another journal or outlet to disagree. I reminded him that he would not allow on his website the data and what needed to be explained. Then he wrote a parable that I was 100% wrong, like selling apples that were 100% spoiled. Then when kicked out of one place, I moved the apple cart down the street to sell the spoiled apples elsewhere. Numerically, it was a totally false analogy. First of all, 12 of the 14 that he cherry-picked out were good (85%). Even if all 14 were bad, then 14 from 1500-plus is less than 1%, leaving 99% good. And when I explained to him that lack of logic in his math, he was even more angry and told me not to communicate with him any more on what he deemed invalid stuff. I was happy to cease communications with him, but my research was indeed solid. So unreasonable he was!

Fortunately, the other UA specialists (30 of 32) are friends, have been kind and reasonable people. I list the kind reasonable ones with their specialties in parentheses (UA = has done comparative work on the whole Uto-Aztecan language family; those now deceased are in bold): Kenneth Hill (Serrano, Tubatulabal, Takic, UA), **Jane Hill** (Cupeño, Takic, Pima, UA), Pamela Munro (Kawaiisu, Tubatulabal, Tongva, Pima, Takic, Yuman, UA, Muskogean, Zapotec), Karen Dakin (Nahua, UA), Lyle Campbell (Nahua, UA, other language families, leader in Native American linguistics), Joe Campbell (largest Nahua electronic dictionary, too big for a book), John McLaughlin (Shoshoni, Numic), Dirk Elzinga (Shoshoni, Numic), **Ray Freeze** (Mayo, UA, Mayan), **Wick Miller** (Shoshoni, Warihio, Keres, UA), David Iannucci (Numic), Eric Elliott (Luiseño), **Larry Hagberg** (Mayo), David Shaul (Hopi, Piman, UA, other), **Eugene Casad** (Cora, Yaqui), Catherine Fowler (Northern Paiute, UA), Tim Thornes (Northern Paiute), Jason Haugen (UA grammar), Luis Barragan (Pima), **Burt Bascom** (Northern Tepehuan, Piman), Thomas Willett (Southern Tepehuan), Heidi Harley (Yaqui), Jose Luis Moctezuma Zamarron (Cahitan, Piman), Rosa Yañez Rosalez (Nahua), Zarina Estrada Fernandez (Yaqui, Pima), Richley Crapo (Shoshoni), **Mary Ritchie Key** (Nahua, South American languages), **Eloise Jelinek** (Yaqui), David Tuggy (Nahua), and William Merrill (UA) have all been pleasant to associate with. At UA conferences, I always enjoyed listening at the table where Wick Miller and Kenneth Hill sat and discussed UA matters, the two most knowledgeable in UA. Miller passed on in 1994, and we others continued on.

Since Miller's passing, Kenneth Hill, Alexis Manaster Ramer, and myself are the de facto leaders in comparative UA. A few others have a decent grasp of the whole language family: **Jane Hill, Ray Freeze** (both deceased), Haugen (leader in comparative grammar), Munro, Dakin, Merrill, and Fowler. Besides those 7 (now 5) and us 3, all else specialize in a UA language or branch of languages. But of us three, Ken Hill is a scholar and a gentleman, whom I regard very highly through all 40 years of interaction with him. Alexis Manaster Ramer (AMR) is brilliant at times, and can be pleasant when you agree with him, but can be rude and insulting with foul language when not agreeing with him. I first connected with AMR about 1994, when he was a referee of my first IJAL article. The other two referees liked my article and said 'yes, publish!' But AMR had a list of 12 things supposedly wrong with it. I looked at them, thought about them, and realized that I was right on all but 2. So, I corrected the 2, sent it back to David Rood, the editor of IJAL at the time, with explanations of how I was correct on 10 of 12 items. Rood forwarded them to AMR, and AMR agreed to self-disclosure and an open discussion among the 3 of us: Rood (IJAL editor), AMR, and myself. After some discussion, Rood saw my points and published it (1995) though AMR was still against it. AMR really liked my next IJAL article (2000). What changed?

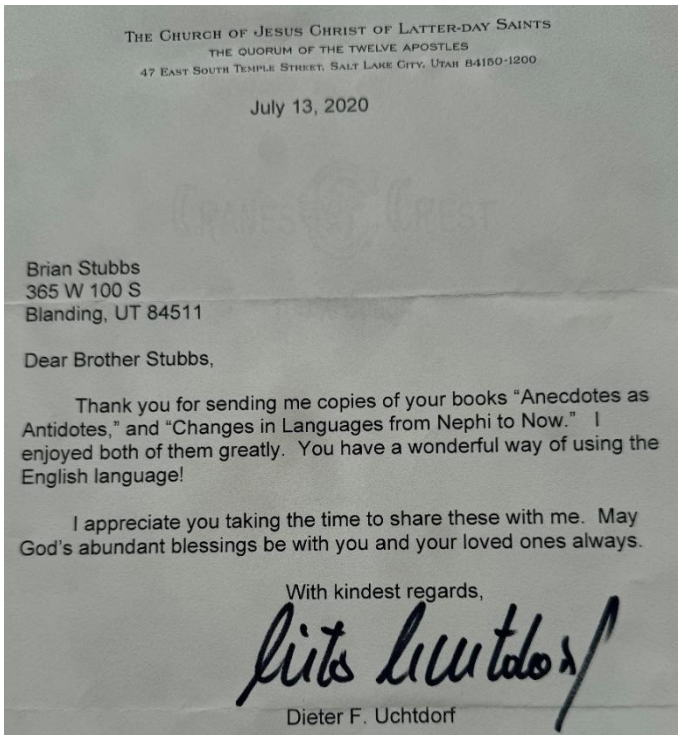
Between those two articles, AMR had sent a mass email to all 100+ on the UA email list, asking for help in working with someone to write up some of his UA thinking. AMR had published prolifically in UA in the 1980s and 90s, but then acquired chronic fatigue syndrome and could not publish by himself lest his disability payments and status stop. I volunteered to help and work with him. He first said 'no', did not want to work with me. Weeks later, he emailed me back and said he would take my help because no one else among the 100 had responded. For the next few years we worked well together. We were 2 of the most knowledgeable in comparative UA matters, and our emails back and forth in furthering his work were productive and interesting discussions. I even wrote for him an article that I presented at the next UA conference; that is, I presented his paper. He never went to UA conferences. Not worth his time or something, he once said. But after a year or two, I realized I had no free time for my own research. He had no children, no job, could research or do what he wanted all day every day, and he thought I should be able to keep up writing up his thinking; but I was raising a family, had a full-time job, ecclesiastical responsibilities, wood to haul and chop, my yard to keep up, etc, etc, none of which he had. What spare hour or two I might find every other day was filled doing his work, not mine. So after several months, I explained, "Hey, Alexis, I can still work with you some here and there, but I have a family, job, etcetera, and not much free time to work on my own stuff, so I need to slow down on helping." He has held that against me the 25 years since. In addition, when I told him that I was near publishing my UA comparative vocabulary, he asked if he could be a co-author? What? He had not worked on it. I had been working on it 25 years, almost done. I cited him in all spots where I cite his work, ideas, or publications, which would add to less than 1% of the book. For background, the Hills and AMR were friends from when they were all at Michigan. So when Ken Hill's favorable review (2012) of my *UA Comparative Vocabulary* (2011) came out, in which Ken spoke well of my work, but also briefly mentions that AMR and I had worked together, with some hint that maybe I benefitted from that, I did not blame Ken, for I knew that AMR had filled Ken's ear with the story that I was a leading Uto-Aztecanist because I had worked with AMR. Hardly! Three years after that review, I published (2015) *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in UA* (also after 30 years work), which shows that the origins of many UA cognate sets are from Semitic or Egyptian, and that that is where my insights came from, not from AMR. That blew up the idea that AMR or any other mortal was very influential in my UA thinking.

Back to us three Uto-Aztecanists—Ken Hill, AMR, and brian. Ken is remarkable and likable, kind and really smart, and has done much good work in Serrano, other UA languages, comparative Takic, and comparative UA. He is also kind and frequent in his compliments. At a recent UA conference, he said, "Brian, almost every time that I think I have found a new UA cognate set, I look in your book, and there it is!" However, he is 10 years older than me, in his late-80s, and stated that he is finished working on comparative UA. AMR now works mostly in other language families. AMR has done much good work and produced some brilliant insights, but the amount of data he gathers to draw his conclusions is

often limited. As for little old me, I did more digging in more data, enabling me to notice more things that no one else had noticed and to find twice as many cognate sets (2700 sets) as the 1300 of Miller, Hill, AMR combined, and I discovered a key (Hebrew, Aramaic, Egyptian) to 70% of UA, and that the Near-East component in Proto-Uto-Aztecan clarified many previous puzzles in UA. My *UA Comparative Vocabulary* book and my UA articles published before 2015 were highly spoken of by all specialists in the field, even MPH said the book was great. However, my book on UA's Near-East tie—the same sets and same quality of work—received a much cooler reception. Five or six of the 30 UA specialists said the work looked solid; the others were silent. That is understandable. For such a controversial proposal, I do not care to make any of my UA friends uncomfortable by pushing the issue any more than simply publishing it and making it available for the world to look at and consider and get used to the idea, for that is what is needed—time. Jerry Grover was good to sponsor the book's publication and to make the PDF available worldwide on his website, and he tells me that people, linguists, scholars from all over the world, including from Israel, have been downloading the PDF. So it is out, but not likely to become accepted in my lifetime.

As for academic persecutions from the paradigm police, I have good company in the great Semitic scholar, Cyrus Gordon, who looked favorably on my Semitic-to-UA reconstructions. Besides 35 books and 350 articles and major contributions on Ugaritic, he was an outside-the-box scholar who showed Linear A was Semitic and that Semites reached the Americas, and for both, he was slandered by academics, though he was a scholar on par with any. I cite "Against the Tide: An Interview with Maverick Scholar Cyrus Gordon" by Hershel Shanks, who references Cyrus Gordon's autobiography, *A Scholar's Odyssey* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), pp 48, 53, 81,84-85, 105: "'Academia is full of litigious and ill-willed people.' Famous scholars like Ephraim A Speiser tried to 'destroy' him. William F. Albright treated him 'misanthropically' and kept him on 'unilateral respiration.' One college president where he taught was 'dictatorial'; another was 'vindictive and ruthless.' His academic colleagues were sometimes 'jealous' and 'vicious,' resorting to 'shameful dirty tricks.'" So I guess the slanders against me are standard procedure against departers from paradigm.

After publishing *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*, 2nd edition, I sent two copies to each of the Twelve Apostles and to the Seventy Presidency, a pile of packages to the Church Office Building.



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1200

July 13, 2020

Brian Stubbs
365 W 100 S
Blanding, UT 84511

Dear Brother Stubbs,

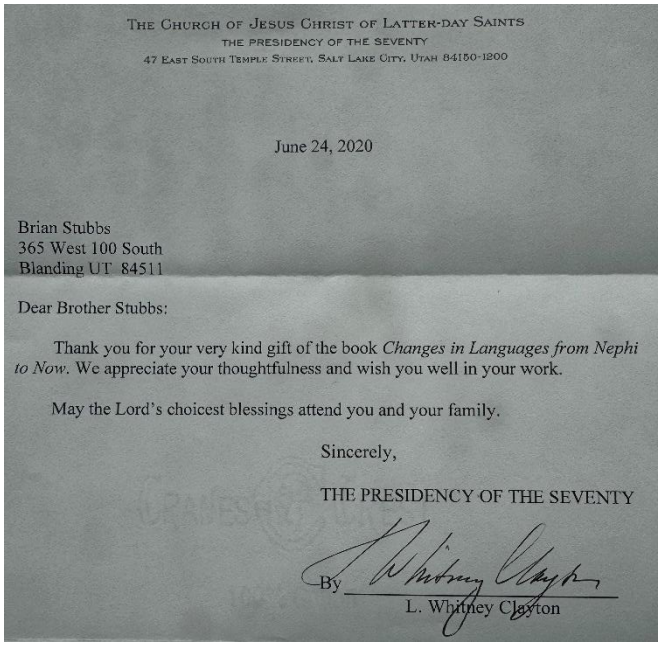
Thank you for sending me copies of your books "Anecdotes as Antidotes," and "Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now." I enjoyed both of them greatly. You have a wonderful way of using the English language!

I appreciate you taking the time to share these with me. May God's abundant blessings be with you and your loved ones always.

With kindest regards,

Dieter F. Uchtdorf

I did not expect responses, as the brethren are busy and bombarded with such gifts, I'm sure, but I thought some might find it interesting to know what is happening in language research realms relevant to the Book of Mormon. I also sent a copy to the BYU presidents, and to other prominent people recommended by my friend Noel Reynolds (retired BYU Vice President). Those who sent nice thank you notes back are Elders Dieter F. Uchtdorf, L. Whitney Clayton, Michael A. Dunn, and BYU's Kevin J. Worthen and BYU-I Henry J. Eyring, and a few seminaries, and others. A response from Tad R. Callister is at 2018, and from President Dallin Harris Oaks at 2024. The letters contain nothing personal, only thanks and compliments, so none should mind my documenting their kindnesses. A few samples follow:



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
THE PRESIDENCY OF THE SEVENTY
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1200

June 24, 2020

Brian Stubbs
365 West 100 South
Blanding UT 84511

Dear Brother Stubbs:

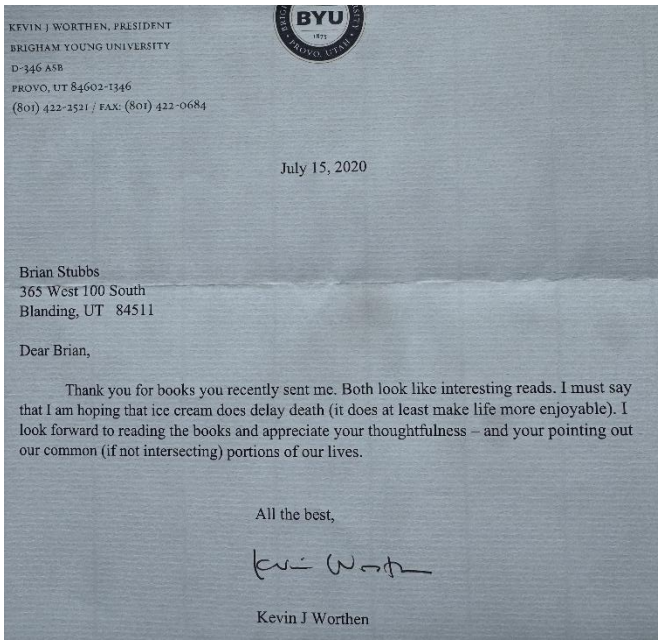
Thank you for your very kind gift of the book *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and wish you well in your work.

May the Lord's choicest blessings attend you and your family.

Sincerely,

THE PRESIDENCY OF THE SEVENTY

By L. Whitney Clayton



KEVIN J WORTHEN, PRESIDENT
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
D-346 ASB
PROVO, UT 84602-1346
(801) 422-2521 / FAX: (801) 422-0684

July 15, 2020

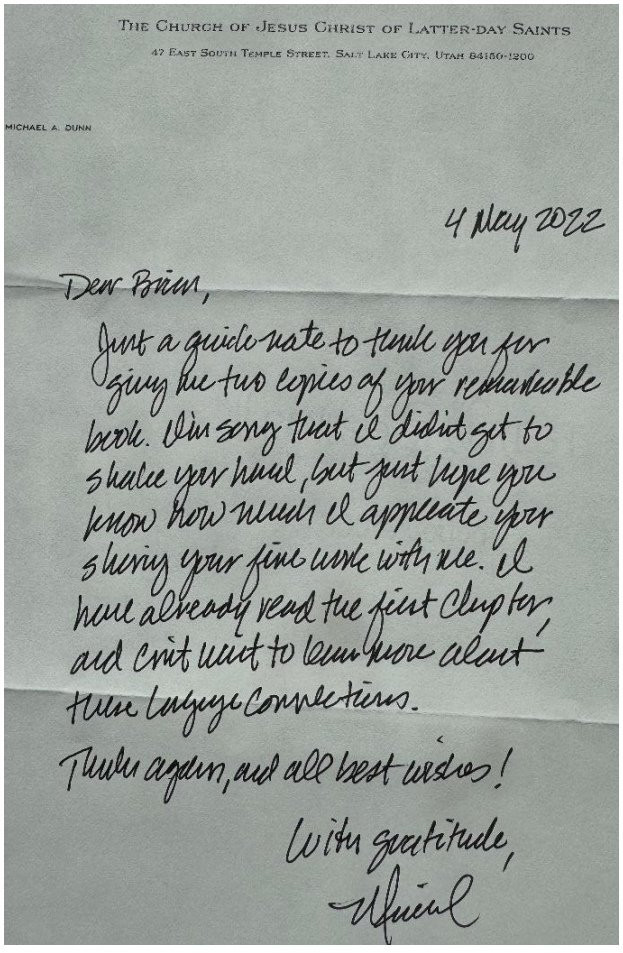
Brian Stubbs
365 West 100 South
Blanding, UT 84511

Dear Brian,

Thank you for books you recently sent me. Both look like interesting reads. I must say that I am hoping that ice cream does delay death (it does at least make life more enjoyable). I look forward to reading the books and appreciate your thoughtfulness – and your pointing out our common (if not intersecting) portions of our lives.

All the best,

Kevin J Worthen



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1200

MICHAEL A. DUNN

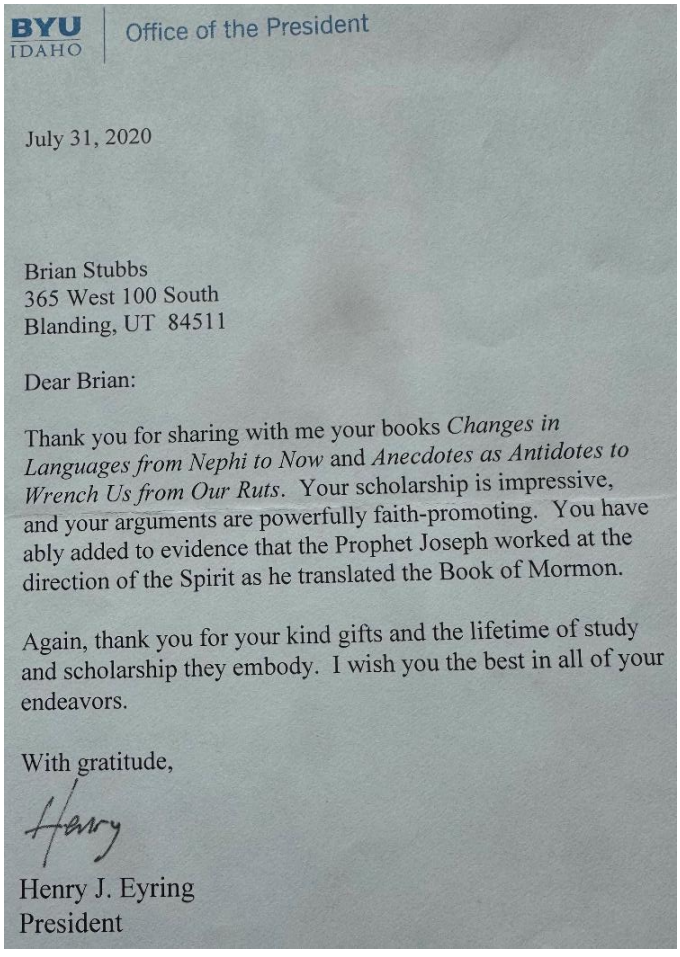
4 May 2022

Dear Brian,

Just a quick note to thank you for giving me two copies of your remarkable book. I'm sorry that I didn't get to shake your hand, but just hope you know how much I appreciate your sharing your fine work with me. I have already read the first chapter, and can't wait to learn more about these language connections.

Thanks again, and all best wishes!

With gratitude,
Mike



BYU IDAHO | Office of the President

July 31, 2020

Brian Stubbs
365 West 100 South
Blanding, UT 84511

Dear Brian:

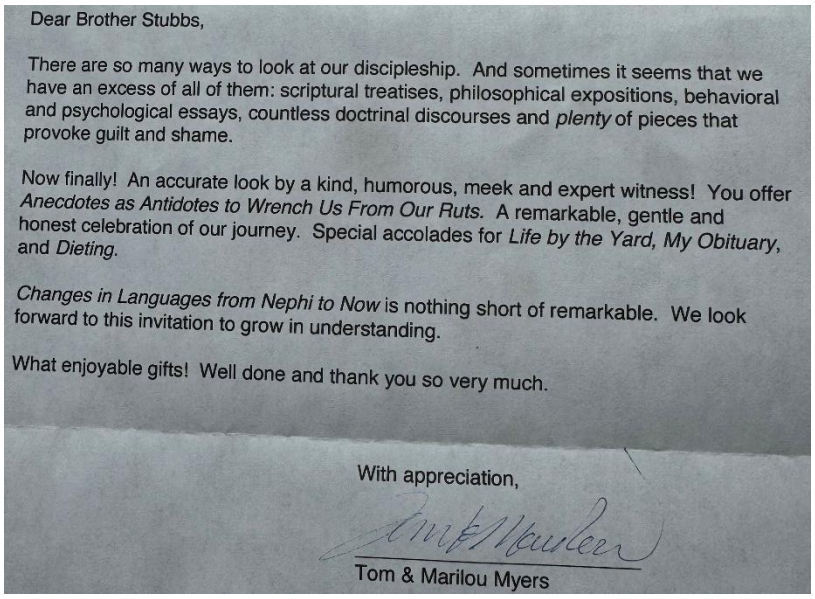
Thank you for sharing with me your books *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now* and *Anecdotes as Antidotes to Wrench Us from Our Ruts*. Your scholarship is impressive, and your arguments are powerfully faith-promoting. You have ably added to evidence that the Prophet Joseph worked at the direction of the Spirit as he translated the Book of Mormon.

Again, thank you for your kind gifts and the lifetime of study and scholarship they embody. I wish you the best in all of your endeavors.

With gratitude,

Henry

Henry J. Eyring
President



Dear Brother Stubbs,

There are so many ways to look at our discipleship. And sometimes it seems that we have an excess of all of them: scriptural treatises, philosophical expositions, behavioral and psychological essays, countless doctrinal discourses and *plenty* of pieces that provoke guilt and shame.

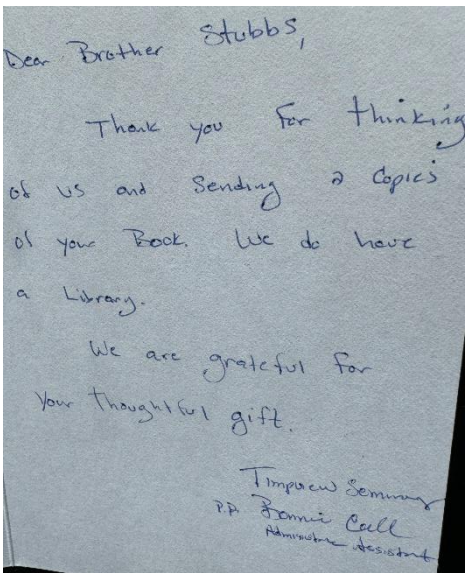
Now finally! An accurate look by a kind, humorous, meek and expert witness! You offer *Anecdotes as Antidotes to Wrench Us From Our Ruts.* A remarkable, gentle and honest celebration of our journey. Special accolades for *Life by the Yard, My Obituary,* and *Dieting.*

Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now is nothing short of remarkable. We look forward to this invitation to grow in understanding.

What enjoyable gifts! Well done and thank you so very much.

With appreciation,

Tom & Marilou Myers



Dear Brother Stubbs,

Thank you for thinking of us and sending 2 copies of your Book. We do have a Library.

We are grateful for your thoughtful gift.

Timpview Seminary
P.P. Bonnie Call
Administrative Assistant

Excerpts from a long letter by Jeff Olsen: "Dear Brian, I have finished reading your book (*Changes in Languages*) and wanted to thank you for your time and academic approach to such an intriguing subject. Your book has given me a whole new perspective … You hit my radar years ago when you were in Cedar City and contributed some intriguing insights to FARMS … I was curious when you moved to Blanding, but your book and things you have written … have cleared up my concerns. … You have carefully (charitably) blasted my hubris. … Thank you for referencing Hugh Nibley again and again. You stand on his and John Sorenson's shoulders, adding immensely to their work. … I rue a life that has been too myopic, parochial, provincial. You have given me a new charge to push forward, looking into challenging arenas … I love the word of God. Your narrative has helped me realize even more how solid this rod of iron really is. All the best, sincerely. Jeff Olsen"

I had to look up words to read his letter too.

Dec 16, 2020: I have my 2021 New Year resolution: Do what I want! Except when I can't. Per the suggestion that we break down a big goal into smaller goals, I'll break it down into monthly goals:

January: Enjoy covid isolation and research
February: Enjoy covid isolation and research
March: Look outside and see if spring is coming, and then research
April: Enjoy turning 72, telling people I am finally old now, so put me out to pasture and let me research.
May: Look outside again and see if spring has come yet, then research.
June: Return to the mountains for study-hikes, and research.
O yes, and the green says spring has come, so start making our yard beautiful.
July: Study-hike in the mountains, research, and keep trying to make our yard beautiful
August: Enjoy study-hikes in the mountains, research, and try once more for a perfect yard.
Sept: Enjoy study-hikes, research, and the annual inevitable conclusion that a perfect yard is an illusion that should not be allowed to afflict mortals with unrealistic hopes that are regularly disappointed.
Oct: Enjoy study-hikes, resume practicing dodging bullets and arrows during all the hunting seasons in the mountains (mussel-loader season, bow season, deer season, elk season, ~~brian season~~)
Nov: A few more study-hikes in the mountains till the first snow hits, research, and watch the yard finish dying for the winter.
Dec: Enjoy Christmas with family, the death of flies, mosquitoes, and weeds,
and enjoy covid isolation and research. Boring, eh?
Unless you love learning and walking in the mountains, then it is an exciting and wonderful life.

Also in 2020, Silvia and I both got covid (after getting the vaccine), a 2nd strain. It nearly killed Silvia, flat in bed for days. I felt little, the cold-to-mild-flu range, kept walking and researching.

2021 is the year of our 50th wedding anniversary. Amazing what a day at a time can add up to. It is also the year that life somewhat returned to normal after covid, and I enjoyed being in the home ward again after 12 years on missions (2009-2021). We were in YSA 2009-2013, then I was called to the high council 2014-2018, in which my main assignments were the Bluff Branch and speaking at the various wards in rotation and being in charge of the Messiah's refreshments each year … I mean I was over stake music and the various details for the Messiah (advertising, programs, refreshments, etc.), but I rested from playing cello in order to focus on guarding the cookies. Yes! Then we were called to serve in the White Mesa Branch for the 4th time (I volunteered), until covid came, initiating months of no church.

May 15, 2021, Saturday: Today Shana texted me that Daniel Dixon (former counselor to Duane in Queen Creek, now a seminary teacher in Burley, Idaho) was coming to Blanding to speak at a youth conference, invited by Bishop Eric Acton, a former missionary companion, so I went to listen. Am glad I did. Daniel Dixon was born to Christian parents who instilled in him faith in Jesus Christ, but then his parents divorced and other things had him perturbed with God for the misery and bad things happening in his life. A friend in high school learned he was having a hard time and had also been through hard times but found comfort in reading The Book of Mormon, and felt prompted to give him a Book of Mormon. Daniel had been taught all the bad stuff about Mormons and the Book of Mormon, so he had no plans to read it, but a note inside summarizing her sentiments and testimony of it touched him and he kept it as a token of her kindness. Later curious, he began reading. In pre-Law, he was intrigued by the testimonies of the 3 witnesses and the 8 witnesses. He felt peace and comfort and Christ's love while reading The Book of Mormon. He knew it was true. That friend invited him to a Sacrament Meeting; he took the discussions; he learned more: the true church had prophets and apostles (Ephesians), etc. He then wanted to be baptized. His Mom was furious, having been lied to and brain-washed against it. She paid for him to fly to Oral Roberts University and spend a week with a professor, an anti-Mormon specialist, who had written a book on the subject, which he made Daniel read that week. That week did put doubts in Brother Dixon's mind. Every evening Daniel would call the Institute teacher back home, Brother H. Samuel Cluff, and tell him what was in the book and ask him about it. Brother Cluff went through every item. Most claims in the book were taken out of context, or twisted, or put in bad light when the real truth made it understandable, or they were outright lies! A few things were true, but they did not detract from the truthfulness of the Restored Gospel. We have always agreed that prophets are not perfect, neither ancient nor modern, from Peter who lied 3 times in one night to whatever modern prophet. To judge prophets on their imperfections—dangerous pastime given 'judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgment we judge, we shall also be judged again'. And most of the lies about Joseph Smith, Joseph answered in his day, explaining that "rumor with her thousand tongues was all the time employed in circulating falsehoods about my father's family, and about myself. If I were to relate a thousandth part of them, it would fill up volumes" (Joseph Smith history 1:61). So after reading the professor's book and spending a week sitting under his influence, Daniel was set to fly home just before his scheduled baptism. The professor had seen the doubts weigh in Daniel's face and figured he had him. Just before Daniel left, the professor asked him, confident that he had done the job that Daniel's mother had paid him to do, "So are you still going to be baptized?" Daniel still had some questions and quietly thought a moment, but then told the professor, "I know the Book of Mormon is true, and just recently had a witness that President Hinckley is a prophet on the earth today."

So he gets home, has his baptismal interview, and calls his dad June 8 to tell him that his baptism is tomorrow. He and his dad had not been on speaking terms for years. Yet the next day his dad, from 14 hours away, was at his baptism. A year after his baptism, Daniel went on a mission. His dad came to his farewell. Daniel was companions with Eric Acton in Alaska. When Daniel married in the Alaska temple, his dad flew to Alaska, and later came to the baby blessing of each of Daniel's 4 children.

After Brother Dixon, Bishop Acton spoke a few concluding thoughts. Though raised in the church, he said that he left the straight and narrow awhile, and became very low and depressed. He decided to read the Book of Mormon. In Mosiah chapter 12 of Abinadi preaching mightily to the wicked priests who were about to burn him, Bishop Acton said, "the Spirit testified to me so strongly, that I knew the Book of Mormon was true. The years since then and still today I read the Book of Mormon every day. It is the sweetest experience and I feel God's love for me so much that I don't want to miss a day."

Published the 4th edition of *Morsels for the Mind*. Six years after I retired, I realized that *Morsels* was likely to die with me as no one else is teaching from it. So, I made PDFs of some of the readings and randomly emailed them to a few hundred English teachers throughout the Intermountain West and some Plains states, for them to use, if desired. Many teachers emailed back appreciations and really liked the readings and asked about the book. Well, the 3rd edition books were gone, so I revised the readings, added some, published the 4th edition (2021), and sent it to the interested teachers. In short, *Morsels* is 30% fun and entertaining, 60% interesting deeper thinking, and only 10% boring English book (the appendices). Perhaps a few hundred students are benefitting from its readings periodically, though sometimes I think, "Most people who read it like it; if only more people were aware and were to read parts of it!" I once even prayed along those lines. Then it was as if I felt Heavenly Father's thought, "Yeah, I have a book out too that people don't read." I had to chuckle at myself, that I should even care whether my book is read or appreciated, when His book is much more important, yet ignored by most of the world also.

In June, I crossed paths with my good friend Bob McPherson, and gave him a copy of the new book *Morsels for the Mind*. He was our dean and my supervisor at CEU Blanding, and was the history professor, is a highly published, respected and well-known historian throughout the West. Bob is a good man of benevolent heart and love for about everyone. Two weeks after I gave him a copy, he came by the house. Silvia answered the door. He had read most of my book and said he was very impressed and wanted to buy a copy for his daughter Heather. He has an MA in English, PhD in history, knowledgeable in literature and all the humanities, so for him to be impressed with the book is a significant compliment.

Sheila and Orlo and Siah moved to Blanding! Yay!!! They bought a lot across the street from Sarah, so they'll both live one block west of us, and Jessica and Jorma around the corner in the Henry Black house, which Jorma has added to and fixed up considerably from when we lived there 1976 to 1986. How wonderful to have 3 of our 4 families in town, each a block away!

2022 was the year that the articles "Clarifications on Uto-Aztecan" at timesandseasons.org (October 25, 2022) and "Language Findings Relevant to The Book of Mormon" at bookofmormoncentral.org (2022) were published in response to an article by Jonathan Green posted with timesandseasons.org (January 6, 2019) entitled "Uto-Aztecan and Semitic: Too Much of a Good Thing." My response was a tad tardy because I did not become aware of the article until more than a year after its publication; and then I tried to contact Times and Seasons, but did not hear back from them for another year after I emailed them. Green was decent in his demeanor, but had obviously gotten his sentiments from Chris Rogers' errant views, and so some clarifications were in order. I was later invited to be a guest blogger with Times and Seasons and added the article "Antipus, A Forgotten Hero" (Nov 22, 2022) about Antipus, Helaman, and the stripling warriors.

Also in 2022 I was asked to be a substitute seminary teacher at SJHS, which I much enjoyed. My sudden, year-long sickness in January 2023 stopped that for a year, but I resumed later.

Friday Oct 21: I got up this morning, did some twisting of torso, rolling of shoulders, and other funny looking movements. Silvia asked me what I was doing. I told her I was trying to wake up my inner self to remind my organs: "Hey guys, news flash: I am still alive; keep working; we're not done yet."

Last night (at USU's request) I did the keynote / guest speaker address at the campus's Origins banquet. Some enjoyed the talk, others looked up now and then, but luckily, they all had a meal to enjoy regardless whether the speaker was interesting or not.

In Sept or Oct, we noticed many of Silvia's campaign signs disappearing. An employee called us, saying that he found a pile of Silvia's signs tossed on the baseball field behind the seminary building. I went, and 20 or so signs lay in the dirt. I took pictures, sent them to the police, cleaned the signs off, and reposted them. I visited Police Chief J.J. Brandford, leaving a report, and commented, "I'm not sure who in town dislikes us enough to do that." He answered, "I don't know of anyone who dislikes the Stubbs." That was a meaningful compliment, typifying the pleasantness of our first 48 years in Blanding, though after Silvia's election and years of service, perhaps the previous percentages will need adjusting.

November 8, 2022 Silvia was elected San Juan County Commissioner. The Salt Lake Tribune and the environmentalists and certain SLC judges have been attacking San Juan County for decades. For example, Phil Lyman, a former county commissioner and bishop, very good man, was prosecuted and imprisoned. He did nothing illegal, but while county commissioner he challenged the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on their illegal closures of some of our roads. They were breaking their own "rules" quote-unquote. And why are bureaucracies making laws instead of Congress, as the Constitution says? Senator Mike Lee (in *Our Lost Constitution* 2015, 7), a Constitutional scholar, keeps two piles in his senate office: in 2013 the legislation enacted by Congress was 800 pages (2 inches high); the pile of regulations made by federal agencies was 11 feet high, some 80,000 pages. The Constitution grants only to Congress, yes, to the people's representatives, the power to enact laws. Not even presidents or the courts (should) have that power. But the BLM, using a temporary closure clause (like a few days for fires, etc), did "temporary" closures lasting years. So Lyman organized a protest, but he broke no laws, though the BLM did, yet the SLC and environmental outcry was loud enough that the powers-that-be up north bowed to the pressure and prosecuted him with the invented "conspiracy" charges and put him in prison instead of the real lawbreakers. Phil should write a book on the details, depths and breadths of corruption.

San Juan County has been subject to the craziest case of a federal judge's gerrymandering. We are the biggest Utah county in area. Blanding is the biggest city (3500) and in the center of the county, yet no voting poll place allowed in Blanding. Monticello (2500) 20 miles north gets one and Bluff (300) 26 miles south gets one and 4 or 5 places of a few hundred on the Navajo Reservation all get voting places, which is good, but Blanding, the largest city and in the center, is not allowed a voting place! (That may be changed by the time this is published.) They split the county into 3 districts, each to elect one commissioner. They split Blanding in 3 parts, one part or 1/3 with Monticello to the north that they concede to and expect to be Republican, and 1/3 with the Reservation to the east, and 1/3 with the Reservation to the west (Silvia and I in that one). Because most Navajos vote Democrat, they figured that would give them a majority, 2 of 3 on the commission. Happily, most Navajos have common sense and are not extreme left; for example, Rebecca Benally, a former county commissioner, looked out for her Navajo people as a common-sense Democrat. However, the gerrymandering worked in 2018, and 2 other Navajo Democrat commissioners won, which would be fine if they thought for themselves and their people, but they were secretly directed by SUWA environmental attorneys in Colorado, etc, militantly passing resolutions detrimental to the livelihoods of our county people, as the 2 puppets obeyed the environmentalists. Monticello and Blanding knew it was happening, but it was not provable until hundreds of emails emerged showing exactly how the puppet strings had managed those 2 commissioners the last 4 years. Marjorie Haun's article "San Juan County Corruption" in the *Petroglyph* (Oct 15, 2022) explains the matter well. The Navajo people are mostly good, humble, peaceable people, though many are duped by the Dem lines. Silvia's opponent was one, a nice enough older man, but conned into the secret ploy via the false notion that the environmentalists knew what was best for the Navajo people. Some divide things as Natives against "colonial" whites and claim that the Dems and environmentalists are best for Native Americans. Many Navajos have found out that is not so. Greyeyes was born in Navajo Mountain, UT, but has not lived there for decades, though the judge approved his "umbilical cord" burial there to suffice as residency. As we campaigned in Navajo Mountain (200 miles away by car), every Navajo who spoke of it said he had not lived there for years, but in AZ.

So 4 years later no one was running against Greyeyes. Silvia asked, "They stole it from us last time!" (He was ineligible to run, not living in Utah.) "Are we just going to give it to them this time?" I answered her, "You could run, dear; you'd be a good county commissioner." She decided she would, if no other common-senser did. She is well-informed, smart, outgoing, and grew up in a socialist country (Argentina), well-acquainted with government deception, and is a solid common-sense Constitutionalist. So, she checked with the county daily, and up to the night before the last day to enter the race, no one else had signed up. So the last day, we drove to Monticello, paid the fee, and she registered to run. Blanding is full of good people, yet nearly all thought it was hopeless in the gerrymandered arrangement. Even more gerrymandering happened during the campaign, changing two more times as she campaigned. She would go door to door in her area, then later those blocks were not in her area. Her district is the goofiest shape, not even contiguous.

She won because many among both the Navajo people and Blanding people know her and like her. She taught at the college 20 years and I taught 32 years; thus, many former students in White Mesa, Mexican Hat, Monument Valley, and Navajo Mountain know her or me or both, and those who know us like us. We did many trips to those areas and were ever running into former students who were excited to hear that she was running and said they'd spread the word to vote for Silvia. I had told Silvia beforehand, that she had a better chance of winning than anyone else, because those in Blanding who know her like her (got 87%), though only 1/3 of Blanding could vote for her, and she received more than enough votes in other Reservation areas, because many former students of ours like her. She won, and literal tears of relief and cheers of joy of so many in Reservation areas and in Monticello and Blanding erupted!

Later, a liberal reporter came from SLC to interview her and asked, "Why are not people excited about you and making noise? There was lots of excitement and noise for Greyeyes." So typical of his world view and the two different worlds. Indeed, the liberal and environmental circles in SLC (his circles) were excited about Greyeyes; however, here in San Juan County the cheers, noise, and excitement for Silvia's election were overwhelming, among many Navajos too. I have never known anything quite like it. The reporter was simply in a different world. Some Navajos called Silvia and said their prayers were answered. Many of them knew of the corruption, and among Blanding and Monticello people there was lots of noise. Especially the county employees breathed huge sighs of relief and happiness, because the two previous had driven out some of the best county employees under the direction of their puppeteers (see Marjorie Haun's article). One county employee had moved here to help clean up the racism that he had heard existed in San Juan County, but after working here a few months, he learned that it was the environmentalists and their obedient puppets that were agents of unfairness and trouble, and he found that most of the people were not racist at all. Jamie Harvey, a Republican Navajo (also a former student of mine), ran in the other district so that a 3 of 3 Republican sweep surprised everyone.

A SLC liberal bemoaned the loss of diversity in San Juan County, not realizing that the two new commissioners (both Republicans) who beat the two puppets were another Navajo man and a Latina woman. Considerable diversity! Someone corrected the SLC paper on their hypocrisy.

Part Three: Bearing the Burdens

2023 January 3, Silvia was sworn in as San Juan County Commissioner. How many couples include a San Juan County Commissioner and one having spent time in the San Juan County jail (1970)?

After being healthy all my life, at 73 came pain! I started getting tired at 4 miles (vs 12-15 not long before). I wondered: am I aging that fast, or is something else wrong? Monday Jan 23, I went to see Dr Joe. I had had sudden high blood pressure: Jan 21 it was 220/104, but often 180/90. Joe did a bunch of blood tests. Tuesday Jan 24 we were preparing to drive to SLC for Silvia's meetings at the State Capitol, when Joe called, "some tests came back with worrisome numbers." I was at stage 5 kidney disease, near kidney failure. Both he and Dr McCullough said that if I went to SLC, by Friday (return date), my kidneys may have failed. At age 69, my GFR was 101, healthier than most 20-year-olds. But

this January test (age 73), it was 14, borderline kidney failure / dialysis. Creatinine was 4.6. My large prostate was backing up urine and putting pressure on kidneys, and damaging the kidneys and raising BP. So I was immediately admitted to the hospital, a catheter put in, and 3100 ML were drained from my bladder and relieved my poor oppressed kidneys. In days, my kidney numbers improved from 4.6 to 3.6 to 2.7 (normal 1.2) and my BP was good, 100/62.

Thursday Jan 26 the patient in the next room died. The mortician, Corbin Palmer, came by with a gurney, turned into my room, but noticed I was not quite as far gone as whoever he was looking for. He looked up at my room number (18), then asked the nurses: "Is it 19?" I felt so weak that I considered volunteering. By the time I was discharged 6 days later, I had lost 15 pounds in 6 days and 5 more pounds soon after. I simply did not feel like eating much—a new feeling for me. I appreciate the doctors—Dr. McCullough and Walker—and the kind nurses who cared for me in the hospitals. For 4 months, I felt sick enough that I did not know whether I had long to live or not. I read some books on health, quit sugar completely and ate more vegetables, less red meat, and in 3 months or so, my PSA had dropped from 34 to 16, strictly by diet. Those are both high, but a remarkable improvement with only diet. By May 2023, I still felt slow and weak, walking 4 blocks was an effort, but gradually started feeling better, not great, but a little better each month. I was the commissioner's chauffeur and barely felt well enough to drive.

Silvia's schedule is grueling. We go to SLC legislative meetings every Tuesday through Friday, from January to early March, and things hardly slow after that. She works or worries about 70 hours a week at that part-time job as county commissioner: meetings, travel to and from, hundreds of pages of reading each month on upcoming issues / decisions. But she is amazing, despite performing all such in a 2nd language and hitting a formidable learning curve in not knowing everything, as no one does. The hardest part is that she does her best for the most people, but any decision inevitably makes some mad.

June 2023 Malin and Madison married. Regarding their union, I am not sure why the Lord kindly gave me a piece of His mind two and a half years previously, but He sent down upon me a clear definite impression, recorded in my journal March 12, 2021. The instant I awoke, it was like I was in a room-sized bubble, filling the room and me with an enveloping knowledge that Madison is for Malin. It could not have come from me or my thinking, because I was not awake or thinking anything, and had never thought about it. At the time, I knew who she was, but did not know her well. I knew she seemed like a wonderful person, later corroborated by everyone who knew her. Her parents, Preston and Mar Dawn Grover Palmer, I knew are wonderful people and her grandparents, Merlin and Lou Ann Grover and Phil and Lawana Palmer, and their extended families are wonderful people, so I was in favor, if that is what the Lord had in mind. I could only wait and watch to see if it happened, as improbable as it seemed at that point: (1) they did not know each other; (2) they lived in different states; (3) Madison had barely started her mission; (4) Malin had finished his and was going to school in AZ and dating. The odds of their even meeting, let alone marrying, seemed zilch, so I simply thought, we'll wait and see. If it is of God, He has a lot of arranging to do. As time went by, I told my wife and daughters of the experience, but no one else. As we watched Madison's younger brother, Jace Palmer, play amazingly well as he quarterbacked the SJHS football team to the 2A state championship in the Fall of 2021, I whispered to Sheila seated next to me a couple of games: "Malin's brother-in-law is pretty good!"

Sheila and I attended her homecoming. Impressive young lady. She said she always sang the hymn "I'll stay where you want me to stay, Dear Lord" because covid prevented her from serving in Argentina, where she was called, but was reassigned to SLC Spanish-speaking. Both she and Malin went through other relationship(s), and had had it with relationships such that each had about decided to forget marriage, as I heard it. They did meet and later started communicating. Then they were engaged and then they married 11 months after they met. Amazing! The Lord knows what He is doing, unlike we witless mortals. I am also grateful to the Lord for the good spouses that He has blessed my posterity with.

Like 2023 began with my health ordeal, so did it continue. From this remote corner of the world, it took time to find specialists 300 miles north (and to even get an appointment, months out) to determine what was best and to find a good surgeon to do it, but with many prayers from family and community, I

felt He was with me in this. After some exams, I was told that my choices were surgery or have a catheter the rest of my life. I did have a catheter nearly a year while waiting for surgery, and that was plenty!

Dr Sparenborg did the RASP surgery, removing 80% of prostate, leaving 20%, its original size, allowing the bladder to re-expand to its original volume. The surgeon's assistant said that my prostate was twice the size of the usual "large" prostate extracted in such surgeries. Alan and Necia were kind to let me stay two post-op days at their home before I drove to my home. The surgery was successful, better than TURP or other. I could sleep through the night again, travel 4 hours without stops, etc. All such innards worked as well as before, BP 130/65, kidneys good again, etc. They also tested the 80% removed prostate and no cancer found, which was remarkable in light of a PSA of 34 to 16. Yet I am older, slower, weaker, cannot walk as far, get tired faster, but otherwise healthy, I'm told. From January's first hospitalization to surgery in November and recovery in December, that ordeal filled the whole of 2023.

Besides feeling lousy the first months, severe pain came with bladder cramps when catheters plugged a few times that year. The first few catheter insertions were very painful, 9 on a scale of 10. Then I thought: once they are in, catheters do not hurt, so it must be the rate of change that hurts, not the resultant change. So when it plugged up in SLC, I dropped Silvia off at the Capitol for meetings, then went to the U of U ER. I was stuck in rush-hour traffic 8 a.m. and the cramps got worse and worse. By the time I arrived at the emergency room, found parking, walked the distance, and did the painful paper work, I was doubled over in pain when cramps hit and tried to soften my screams to loud groans. Trying to get signed in and processed through red tape in such pain was excruciating, same in all 3 ERs. I told the U of U nurses my theory or thinking and to try inserting much more slowly than usual. They agreed that it sounded reasonable and did so, and the pain was much less, like 3 instead of 9. Some nurses of urologists, more practiced, did so with almost no pain. The year-long 2023 ordeal, January to December, finally ended. Sparenborg's well-done surgery solved the problem, ended the pains, and I could sleep through the night and walk again. If I walked more than a mile during the 10 catheter months, the slight chafing inside would cause internal bleeding. So exercise was near nothing that full year. The nurses were pleasant, yet being naked in front of 14 consecutive nurses over the course of a year makes it easy to be humble, though simply being old and slow and a little uglier each year works too.

2024 began with the nerve-racking weekly winter trips to SLC for meetings with the legislature January to March, which are very beneficial to the counties, but scary in snow, especially over Soldier Summit (7500 feet) or Monticello (7000 feet), but the Lord answered our prayers and we survived.

I used to attend the Uto-Aztecan (UA) conferences nearly every year from the 1980s to 2017, but I quite dislike traveling big cities. Alternating years are in Mexico, which is only fair and was nice in ways, went 4 or 5 times, but the travel was more stressful and the cartels had killed my cousins, so I had not attended in 7 years, but as this one was in Tucson, AZ, closer than most, I decided to try. Drove from SLC to Blanding, Th Feb 15, then Friday, I left Blanding 4 a.m. and drove to Tucson by 1 pm to catch the afternoon sessions of the UA conference. As I drove so long in stressful traffic with people honking at me while trying to figure out how to maneuver places I had never been before, I thought this might be my last UA conference. I do not like to bumper-car my way to places I have never been before. But when I walked in, it was heart-warming to see how happy many of them were to see me. It was the first time in 7 years since I had seen them (in 2017). God was with me, protected me from a couple of close calls while driving. The two days were wonderful. They still respected me, in spite of the Semitic-UA tie. They oft asked what I thought. Once they said, "Brian has probably studied this stuff, and he's right here. Brian, come to the front and comment on Petrova's issue of Luiseño absolutive suffixes." She was presenting via zoom from Russia. The whole conference was valuable, hearing the presentations, and what others thought and had to add, and their hearing what I had to add. Also enjoyed staying at Shana's both nights between. I left copies of *Morsels for the Mind* and 10 people took and appreciated getting a copy: Barragan, Tubino, Dakin, Rosales, Harley, Everdell, Acuña, Haugen, and 2 others I cannot remember.

Sunday morning (Feb 18) I awoke with a wonderful peace and good feeling for the good people there, and that going to the conf was a good thing to do and that the Lord was with me. Then I drove home.

Other trips regularly remind me that I am old. May 2024, Silvia had to go to meetings of some national association of county commissioners near Yosemite, north of Fresno. Being her chauffeur and support team, I went too, but being an old guy and not tech-savvy was way too apparent. Jessica did the tech tricks to make our tickets readable on our phones. As we drove to Durango, CO, airport, Silvia told me not to make waves. "I'm peaceable," I said. She was referring to the "Stokes vs. the Oakland Airport" story and wondered if making trouble at airports was in my genes. I tried hard to be on my best behavior. At the picture-taking to check for weapons, they said "put your hands up." I quickly put my hands up. Did not want anyone to shoot. I came out, and they said it did not work. Had to go back and get another see-through photo. Flattering? Not really. I guess my hands were too high, supposed to be curved over and barely above my head, not straight up. Well, that is not what they said. They said, put your hands up. Got through that. After boarding the jet, the multi-ton mass of metal lumbered to the starting line. It acted tired, with wings bouncing like they'd break if we hit a bump. Then I thought about the physics of how this mass of metal (the weight of a diesel truck?) was going to fly. You see, it gets going fast enough that the air going over the convex top of the wing is going faster than the air going under the flat under-wing and the difference in those two speeds (how different can they be?) creates a lower air-pressure on the top side of the wing and that is what lifts it, keeps the diesel in the air. Really? That's what the physics book said. But the wings were already flapping as we dawdled toward the runway. How do they stay on at 200 mph? Or when hitting turbulence? I kept in mind the stats that flying is safer than driving, which was no comfort when the last leg was driving a rental in California traffic. I also thought, "well, if the physics doesn't work, I'm okay with a transfer to yonder spheres. It'll be quick. And actually, we were on the last row, row 27, so we would be the last to hit the mountain, plus we would each have 26 soft bodies ahead of us to cushion the impact. But the wings stayed on and the physics worked one more time. Then the mile run to another terminal was nearly terminal, but we arrived in time for the next physics experiment. One plus to flying is window seats to watch the landscape and mountains below, but the guy who had the window, slept the whole time. I felt like waking him and saying, "Hey, let's trade seats. Let me look out the window and you can sleep in my seat." But I behaved and ate my pretzels. A scuffle over a window seat, and they might give me a parachute and drop me off over Nevada. Years ago, I would have enjoyed a walk from Nevada back to Utah, but I am old now. I could not understand the instructions either. Between their accents, their talking so fast through what they say several times a day, and the echo-y sound system, I did not catch much. But I figured it did not matter. If we crashed and if the 26 soft bodies in front of me allowed me to survive, I just needed to remember to take the seat cushion for a pillow on the walk back to Utah. (They did talk about using the seat cushion for something.) But we landed safely and now the 3rd and scariest leg. We find the car rental and the car. But I could not start it. Long story short, Sheila had a car like it, so we called her three different times to explain goofy features, like how to start it, how to turn it off, lock it, and turn on the lights when it got dark. I like cars with a key to put in an ignition, not magic cars that work like magic if you know how to do the magic. Driving in cities never seen before is not a favorite pastime. A near head-on collision with a guy who came straight at us in our lane, but last second, jumped a curb and went another way, did nothing to reassure us that there was nothing to worry about. After finding the freeway, surviving it, then waiting 20 minutes in a line behind an accident being cleared from the highway, we wound through the curviest road on earth, in pitch black, taunted by tailgaters, and arrived at 10:30, after landing at the airport 6:30, supposedly an hour away. But I enjoyed walking in the forest the days between traveling to and from. Yep, I'm a non-tech old guy! Weeks later a senior missionary couple were killed in a Fresno car accident.

In April, I received an unexpected response from President Dallin Harris Oaks, after writing him of our families crossing paths in ways in olden days. My letter and gifts to him and then his response follow.

Dear President Oaks,

I enjoyed reading your biography *In the Hands of the Lord*. Your service is exhaustingly admirable and your example inspiring. Though I write a few things that may be of interest to you, you are busy, so don't feel obligated to respond.

One, my mother, Eva Stokes Stubbs (1927-2018), said that she baby-sat you and your brother Merrill years ago in Twin Falls, that her family / parents Henry and Edna Stokes knew you and your parents, Stella and Lloyd Oaks, and that your father was their family physician. She and her twin sister Orpha (picture below) were 5 ½ years older than you, so I'm guessing my mother was 12 or 13 when you were 7 or 8, when you all lived in Twin Falls.

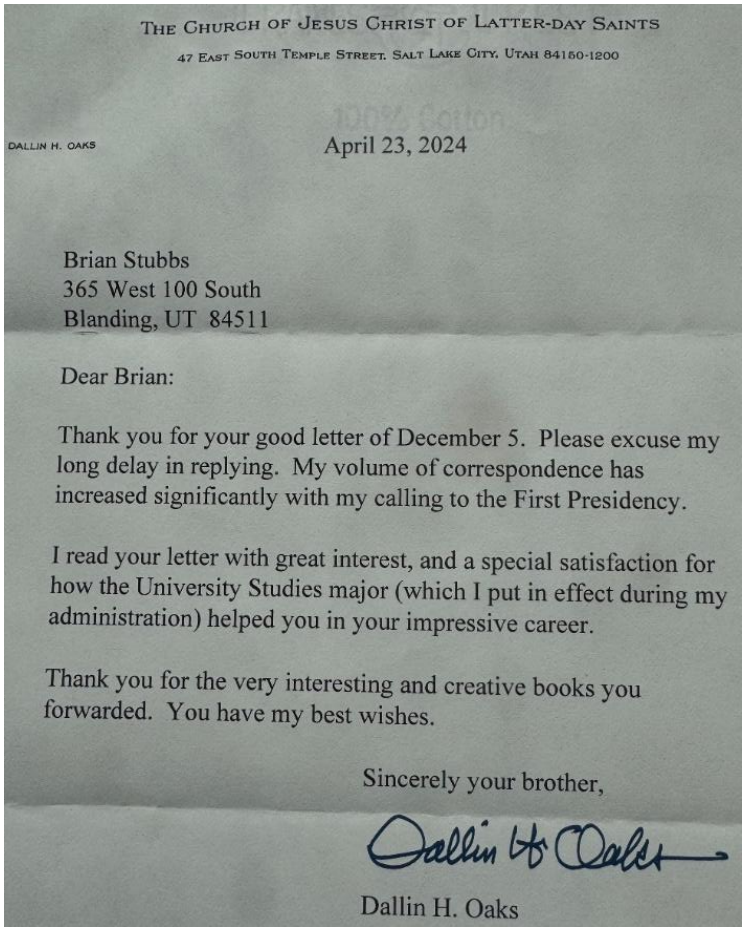
Two, we all ended up in Provo. You attended BYHigh and played oboe there; my father, Darrel Stubbs (1925-2017), 7 years older, played oboe at Provo High. You also both ended up at BYU: you as president (1971-80) and my father as music faculty (1963-90) and oboist in the Utah Symphony. I started my BA at BYU in 1971, and it was during your administration that the University Studies major was implemented just in time for me. As I remember, if no existing major fit a person's goals or future studies, a student could propose a program of study uniquely suited for his/her future (my situation exactly) subject to approval. I was interested in Semitic languages and Native American languages, thinking of graduate work in Egyptology or linguistics, but a major in Spanish or any other single language meant a lot of literature courses irrelevant to my interests and future. I had 3 years of Spanish, 2 years of Navajo (my mission language), 3 years of Hebrew, 1 year each of Egyptian (under Nibley), Arabic, and German. So the University Studies major was perfectly timed for me to graduate with such.

Three, you may enjoy the enclosed books. *Changes in Languages* summarizes a life's work (still ongoing), citing some data from two large (boring) reference works that took 30 years each, but *Changes* relates their relevance to the Book of Mormon and is more interesting. *Anecdotes as Antidotes to Wrench Us from Our Ruts* is fun / entertaining, reported by many to be uplifting when discouraged. Favorites are 1-5, 9, 14,15, and my tentative obituary 22. By the way, your son Dallin Dixon Oaks, linguist at BYU, is a most pleasant fellow, whose friendship I appreciate greatly.

Best wishes and prayers for you in all your challenging responsibilities, brian



Orpha and Eva Stokes 1942 (later Mrs Morris Gardner and Mrs Darrel Stubbs, all formerly of Provo, now at rest)



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1200

DALLIN H. OAKS

April 23, 2024

Brian Stubbs
365 West 100 South
Blanding, UT 84511

Dear Brian:

Thank you for your good letter of December 5. Please excuse my long delay in replying. My volume of correspondence has increased significantly with my calling to the First Presidency.

I read your letter with great interest, and a special satisfaction for how the University Studies major (which I put in effect during my administration) helped you in your impressive career.

Thank you for the very interesting and creative books you forwarded. You have my best wishes.

Sincerely your brother,

Dallin H. Oaks

Dallin H. Oaks

Very kind of him to respond. Recently learned that Dallin Harris Oaks is descended from Emer Harris, older brother of Martin Harris.

April 25: Now at 75, I am a quarter of a century older than 50-year-olds. Ouch!

May 27: I became aware of Maurine Proctor's article "The Book of Mormon has plenty to say about bad political leaders." Almost immediately after it was published, I submitted the following, but editors evidently did not like my comment, because they never posted it. My submission was thus: "Good and relevant article. Angel Herrero's comment is solid. Beyond national leaders, the Book [of Mormon] warns of "secret combinations" which are many, nationally and globally, the former subservient to the latter. The Controligarchs (by Bruner) is a start to clarifying which Americans serve the anti-American secret combinations, seeking power, not peoples' freedoms. Most presidents do little to dent the combinations founded by the evil one (2 Nephi 26:22), a few facilitate them, but the combinations know which among recents is the greatest threat to weaken their power, thus he is the most persecuted in history, while the facilitators are free to facilitate destruction."

Without naming him, it is apparent of whom I spoke and obvious that the editors do not like Trump, though he is the greatest threat to the secret combinations of both the deep state and the global cabals designing to weaken the USA and gradually control it. Time will tell, unfortunately.

In June, I was revising an article that BYU invited me to write for a volume on the Book of Mormon. The BYU editors really liked it. "Truths Tongues Tell on a Book of Mormon Language Family" may create a stir in that, beyond a summary of the data showing its descent from Hebrew, Aramaic, and Egyptian, the article also addresses evidence for Book of Mormon peoples' movements, some groups calling themselves Nephites, and other compelling evidence.

June 28 was Don Smith's funeral, passed at 79 from complications of a surgery, a descendant of Samuel Smith and Joseph Smith, Sr. It was wonderful to see his children again—Jennifer, Chris, Denise, Stephen, Jolynn—whom I haven't seen for years. I wrote Don's family my thoughts: "Don Smith is one of my favorite people—a good man and fun. We both taught at CEU 30-plus years, we shared an office several years, and I helped him do the Summer Experience program several years, which included classes, the river trip, operas, musicals, Grand Canyon geology, etc. He was in charge, made the arrangements, and I enjoyed tagging along to assist, driving a van, teaching a class, helping with the river trip and other adventures with vans full of mostly well-behaved students. In 30 years of working with Don Smith, he was always pleasant and easy to work with. I never had a moment of not getting along with Don Smith.

Over the years, I often heard how much students liked Don and his classes. He had an entertaining flair for presenting his substantial amount of knowledge. I also had some of his children and grand-children in class, and have always been impressed with the quality of people in the Don Smith family.

He always had entertaining stories to share and knew a lot about many things: geology, the local mining lore, history, claims, and places, about persons and places in the history of southern Utah, and about physics and chemistry. He was always interesting to listen to.

He is a good man in a good place. I remember when our son Joseph died, he must have noticed that our wood pile (Christmas time) was not as supplied as usual, and without saying anything to anyone, he brought a truckload of wood and added it to the then meager pile. Do well, and we'll soon all be where he is too. (Time flies whether you're having fun or not.) Bless you all, his wonderful family."

That caused me to reflect how many friends my age or younger have been transferred to yonder spheres: Preston Nielson at 59, Ron Kartchner at 71, Lynn Laws 70, Taylor Palmer 70, Don Smith 79.

Also in June, I was reminded of a movement among some church intellectuals who do not believe in Adam and Eve, but only in evolution, and do not believe that Christ is divine, nor that the Book of Mormon happened in ancient America, nor that Joseph Smith saw God and Jesus. The so-called intellectuals come out of supposedly elite universities, readily absorbing the thinking / theories of the world or the wisdom of the wise that shall perish, as Isaiah says. I have worked with many PhDs, including Harvard PhDs. Smart lot generally, but some are dumb, if their deficiencies in logic, reason, and reality swallow those kinds of things. The recent discovery of Nahom right where it had to be practically proves the Book of Mormon by itself. Then add the names thought nuts for 100 years until recent decades when found Southeast of Jerusalem (Alma, Lehi, Nephi, Laman, etc). Then add chiasmus, Isaiah alignments, and much else of its contents. Then add to those the thousands of evidences in Uto-Aztecan, whose Near-East roots explain many previous puzzles in UA phonology. Then add that some of the groups still call themselves 'Nephites' (the Hebrew and Aramaic forms of Nephite(s). An enormous amount of evidence for the Book of Mormon makes it certain, proven in so many dimensions of logical evidence. I cannot think of one good argument against it. If they think it false, then they are calling Joseph and the 11 witnesses liars, not to mention Isaiah whose whole 29th chapter is about the Book of Mormon. Not even considering witnesses, the evidences in the text, at Nahom, and in the American languages prove him a prophet, as he said time would do eventually. And only more evidences will come forth to make all such cases of truth ever more invincible, and cause the wisdom of the wise to perish, much of it already debunked, though they deny the plain evidence discovered, frolicking in the continuing delusions of what they think they know, when the intellectual gymnastics do not hold water.

How do they rationalize that Christ is not divine? Many have seen the resurrected Christ—Joseph, Oliver, Sydney, Lorenzo Snow, Peter, James, John, and hundreds of their contemporaries in Palestine and in the New World. Are they all liars? No, they are honest, upright witnesses. The truth of the Book of Mormon and Joseph's prophecies being fulfilled all support the fact that Joseph is a prophet and that the resurrected Lord lives. Regardless what other species populated the planet before Adam and Eve, Joseph and others saw Adam and Eve, and they're mentioned in the DC, and certainly head the human race. So foolish is the intellectual spin and wisdom of the world. My article "Time Will Tell—on All of Us" raises many solid objections to evolution as espoused by academia even if evolution is in play to a degree, but not nearly to the extent they espouse.

Thoughts on serving a senior mission: After we retired, a senior mission was certainly an option for Silvia and me. During my two-year, full-time mission, I taught and baptized only one who remained active, then through another 20-plus years of stake missions, I only interviewed 2 or 3 other baptisms whom others taught. Rather meager results for so many years, it seemed, though the prophet Joseph Fielding Smith did not baptize any during his 2-year mission in England. On my mission, perhaps others were more positively influenced than I knew about. A Brother and Sister Black with 5 or 6 children were a wonderful Navajo family that we taught awhile in the 80s. I have thought about them and hoped the best for them the years since, but do not know what followed my contact with them. Silvia wrestled the kids every Sunday for decades as I worked in Chilchinbito, Lake Powell, Kayenta, Bluff, and Blanding. In Mexican Water, where I served 55 years ago, 2 to 5 now attend after 55 years of elders' efforts. So I

often feel discouraged with not much to show for so many years of effort, though maybe we did more good than I know. Yet I have heard via various grapevines that my research cleared the last stumbling block for the reactivation or joining of more persons than my 20 years of missions did, especially among those swayed by the internet propaganda against the Book of Mormon (though hundreds of evidences!!!), and that my book or fireside had removed the last obstacle needed for "yes, I'm in!" So the research is a mission, and seemingly more successful for those who know and accept all else, but the propaganda against the historicity of the Book of Mormon gave them doubts, and I am the only one doing that research. After retiring in 2014, I finally finished in 2015 the major founding work *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan,* and in 2016 *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*, and in 2020 a 2nd edition of *Changes*, and in 2023 an important 2nd edition of *Exploring*. I have written other articles, have done dozens of firesides, and am presently preparing an article that BYU requested. So the articles, books, and firesides continue. We also raised a family in which two daughters served missions to Argentina. Among grandchildren, Hayden served in Peru and Southern CA Spanish-speaking, Malin served in Hungary, Justis in Kenya, Packer in the Vanuatu Islands of the western Pacific, Kia in SLC Spanish-speaking, Sander 3 years in the Army in the dangerous Near East, and Aisha in Argentina, so far. Others are still growing up. For years Silvia has done genealogy and name extraction and served in the family history center helping others (what some senior missions are). Hayden got it going, first finding some 1200 of her ancestors, and Silvia has continued adding to it since. Then Silvia was elected county commissioner to cease the destruction underway by puppets puppeteered by outside environmentalist attorneys inimical to the people's good. I also have written 5 life histories. It seems we have both been doing constant missions the last 50 years. Will we someday figure out how to relax or slow down?

From February to May (2024), I drove to Provo regularly for radiation treatments on the recently excised skin cancer on my nose. I got that from wearing glasses with a sharp edge that wore my skin thin. No blood, no pain, but raw enough that a little sun hitting the less protected spot caused a spot of skin cancer. The other skin cancer (2017) between my eyes was from squeezing the pus out of a pimple pore for 40 years now and then. The mild monthly pinching must have discombobulated the cells enough to forget how to grow right. I told Joe, my son-in-law doctor, that he should submit an article to a medical journal on two newly discovered causes of cancer: picking pimples and wearing glasses.

July 4th is a Blanding reunion each year. The celebration's tradition is great enough to attract many former residents and the population of the community doubles or triples every July 4th. This year we saw the Connie Stevenson family—Connie, TeriLyn, Wade, and Jared Stevenson—whom we had not seen in 2 or 3 decades, and Stefani Carroll and Chuck and Jennifer Carroll. Wonderful to see them all again.

For Keith Hatcher's funeral, I was asked to play cello in a string trio with Katherine Hiatt on violin and Annette Adams on piano, both very good. It was fun. We were then asked to play it for 7th ward, then 5th, then 2nd. I had not played cello since before covid, 5 years ago, and was pleasantly surprised that I could still play decently. I played with the Messiah orchestra most Christmases until covid cancelled it, then I was sick 2023. I like the cello, enjoy playing, and am glad that my parents got me started. In past decades, when working, I sometimes felt overwhelmed, as research was a more important priority for me, which takes much time, involving 40 to 200 languages, depending on how much I hoped to illuminate. There is simply not enough time to do everything. However, a good balance was pulling the cello out one month a year to practice with the Messiah orchestra a few rehearsals and perform it. I love the Messiah, amazing music, a masterpiece among world compositions. One year I did practice enough to play the runs of sixteenth notes, etcetera, but expectations of perfection—No! I can play 98% of the Messiah music with two brush-up rehearsals, but the most difficult 1% takes many hours of practice, and among my priorities, perfection in difficult spots is not important. If I were a professional cellist, it would be important, but I'm not, so for whom am I doing this? Do audiences really appreciate that 1%? At those spots, I simply rest or make up fitting but easier parts that also harmonize.

In research, you discover a new piece of evidence and put it in the data-base or book once, and it is done forever. In there forever, to be viewed as a solid pillar supporting whatever, ever after. But at cello-playing, you have to practice many times or regularly to be "in there" and not for very long. It does not stay by itself like a piece of data does. Regularly shifting 4 or 6 inches from one note to another, in an instant, and hitting exactly the perfect spot within a sixteenth of an inch, takes lots of practice! So I enjoy practicing and playing now and then, but I do not do overly intense any more. Another unorthodoxy is that during the nearly 2-hour Messiah, I occasionally skip a number, put my bow down, lean back, let my arms and fingers rest limply, and just enjoy listening. Everything keeps going just fine without me. Many audience members likely do not notice or do not care or wonder if I am dreaming about the refreshments (though they recently ceased the refreshments). For the few who may be judgmental, do I care?

Also in July, we crossed paths with our old-time friends, Ed and Ruby Whitethorne. We met them 40-plus years ago when Joseph and their Troi were little. I love the Dandy family. Jim Dandy, my LTM teacher, his sisters Ruby and Rosie, and his sons, Jim Dandy, Jr, and Nate I know best. Good people.

July 26 and 27, I fasted and prayed for Mack McDonald, county administrator, and Silvia, both misunderstood and often falsely accused.

July 28, 2024: The 7th ward Elders Quorum asked me to do a fireside on "The Isaiah in the Book of Mormon." It went well. The approximately 40 attendees were attentive and enjoyed it, many positive comments afterwards. Mike and Terri Liechty got it rolling. Good people. They happened to come to a fireside that I did at the Bluff Fort a few years ago, and they have been supportive advocates ever since. Terri is a granddaughter of Albert R. Lyman. They recently moved from Utah Valley. They and I are all Provo High graduates now in Blanding—a good move we all agree.

The morning of July 28, I wrote a response to an online article in "Times and Seasons" entitled "Being a Mormon without Believing in a Historical Book of Mormon, Part 1" by Stephen Fleming, a bishop. He posted the article July 25. Most comments were sympathetic, and I can feel for them also, though I think they are either not looking carefully at the facts or are not thinking well after finding them. The article evoked 76 comments so far (Aug 2). I appreciated Jonathan Green's comment two after mine (both in the 58-60 range); he begins: "Brian S., thanks for checking in. I was hoping to see someone lay out the case for the historical Book of Mormon …" My comment was these 4 paragraphs:

"Several of you are right—that love for God and people and how we treat people are most important. And doubts are fine, part of the learning process, etc. Yet keeping them at the doubt stage seems preferable in this case, thinking: Not all the evidence is in yet, so 'I don't know' for sure one way or the other. That is understandable, but concluding that the evidence is against the Book of Mormon? While some apologetics are stretching exercises, increasing amounts are aligning, if not confirming its veracity. (1) The discovery of Nahom, written in stone, no less, and located so convenient to the narrative is very compelling. (2) Chiasmus so copious is difficult to attribute to Joseph or any of his time and place. (3) As Nibley explains well, the idea of records on gold plates was thought hilarious, but later several archeological finds of records written on metal plates of gold, copper, and such in the Near East align. (4) Another item that I have not heard mentioned yet, is that the Syriac serto script is from the root srt, meaning 'to scratch'. Painting on papyrus is not where that term came from, but scratching or engraving on metal plates seems the origin of that term and must have been a common and widespread form of writing to name a script after it. (5) The name Alma was mocked (it is Latin, feminine, etc), but more than a century after Joseph Smith, a man's name Alma is discovered in ancient Jewish records. (6) The 12 witnesses who saw and handled the plates, four of whom also saw the angel—did all of those men have faulty memories or conspire to a hoax? (7) I personally find the Hebraisms impressive, though a PhD(ABD) in Semitic linguistics (Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic) may have biased my perceptions. Admittedly, many answers are yet lacking, like American geography, yet I see hundreds of evidences coming to light and one by one knocking over the supposed objections. So I would not conclude against, but at most, be neutral while watching 'the wisdom of the wise perish' (Isaiah 29:14) as time

methodically removes the stumbling blocks one by one. In fact, the whole chapter of Isaiah 29 is about the Book of Mormon, explained by Nephi in 2 Nephi 26 and 27.

The oft-mentioned anachronisms such as the New Testament precepts and the name of Christ—I can see those as raising some questions, but not unanswerable questions, and whose relative weight does not come close to outweighing the hundreds of evidences in favor. One of the reasons behind the scholarly theory of multiple authors for Isaiah, is Isaiah's naming a far future individual (Cyrus) and what he will do. They do not believe in prophecy, so someone later must have written it, they suppose. Of course, God knows all things and can share with mortals what info He'd like to, such as letting Book of Mormon prophets know that the Messiah will also be called 'Christ'. Even little old me has received info from Above on occasion of future happenings that appear impossible, but then they happen years later, so it seems unwise to me to see the BC mentions of Christ in the Book of Mormon as problematic. The New Testament precepts (e.g., faith, hope, charity) raise a good question, but both Paul and Nephi getting certain things from a more ancient record preceding both seems very possible (also espoused by Nibley), though not known yet. Again, I'm only watching the wisdom of the wise perish a piece at a time, and maybe that piece's time has not come yet.

Most discoveries of truth begin with a hypothesis that needs to be tested. I served a two-year effort to learn Navajo. Afterwards, I wanted to find out if language evidence of Hebrew or Egyptian remained in any Native American languages, so I took Egyptian from Nibley, many other languages, then an MA in linguistics, and a PhD(ABD) in Semitic languages. A few days of studying East Asian languages convinced me that Navajo and its Athapaskan language family came from across the Bering Strait, which was later verified by other linguists. So did I conclude that the Book of Mormon is false? No, that only meant that the search was still on. After looking at dozens of different language families, I learned two things: (1) that Lehi is a small minority in the Americas; but also (2) that Lehi language leftovers are very prominent in one language family (Uto-Aztecan, 70% of Semitic and Egyptian) with much smaller diffusions into a few other entirely unrelated language families. A free PDF is available online of the half-million-word book *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan*. A dozen-plus linguists have called it a good solid case, most remain silent, and only two tried to take it down, addressed in "Answering the Critics in 44 Rebuttal Points" also free online. Many details of that ongoing study are turning into good evidence of Lehi in the Americas.

Northern Israel was taken captive by Assyria and then later lost in various travels and directions. Many books have been written, supposing to trace some of those dispersions. I find some of them interesting, but such are not my specialty, and I doubt that any have been wholeheartedly accepted by academia. Yet does a lack of evidence with academia's stamp of approval mean that Northern Israel's posterity has ceased to exist? And Northern Israel's population was 1,000 times larger than Lehi's little band entering America, and no academically-accepted evidence of Northern Israel's existence is yet a sure thing either. So should a "temporary" (and it is temporary) "supposed" lack of evidence for Lehi in America be reason to doubt the Lord's words and his scriptures? Staying neutral while watching is understandable, but I personally see much more in favor than against."

I was somewhat sympathetic of Fleming's part 1, amiably tried to present the other side, which is so much stronger, not because of me but because of the evidence, truth and reason. However, Fleming's part 2 and part 3 at *Times and Seasons* in mid-August sound to me like he enjoys intellectual gymnastics, dabbling in Plato, etcetera, but is not good at weighing math probabilities of so many truths like Nahom, UA, the things I mention above, and hundreds more which far outweigh the weak maybe's that he throws up, the knowns outweighing the unknowns hundreds to 1. The solid evidences for the Book of Mormon overwhelm the maybe's and remaining unknowns. To give unknowns so much weight against huge irrefutable positive evidences in favor of authenticity is stupidity or a severe deficiency in reason. The wisdom of the wise ***IS*** perishing, but many refuse to look or consider.

August 2: Silvia and I attended the ground-breaking of a new USU building in Monument Valley. Both of us had taught at the old building from 40 years ago. It was nice to meet pleasant people amidst the bombardments that often come Silvia's way. Willis Begay is sure a good pleasant man and leader among his people, president of the Oljato Chapter. We knew him when he was little, staying with the Lovell family when going to elementary school—all wonderful people. It was heart-warming to see him again.

About this time, Silvia had a wonderful and comforting dream in which she felt Heaven greatly pleased with her works on earth, for the thousands of souls beyond, whose genealogy she has done and all her other good works, which she does without ceasing. The dream was a much needed comfort after the ire circulated against her for not doing things she could not: limits exist, due to OSHA regulations, other federal mandates, directives from state attorneys to avoid lawsuits, and due to San Juan County being taken from Utah jurisdiction and put under Federal edict, in both voting contraptions (trap is the key word there) and deciding on number of commissioners, etc.

August 10: Left Blanding 6 a.m. for Provo, listened to Royal Skousen and Stanford Carmack's presentations on the 30-year critical text project, and drove back by dark. It was wonderful, thoroughly enjoyed it, brilliant research by both, and an additional independent witness that the Book of Mormon came from Above and could not have been of earthly invention.

August 11: We volunteered and spoke at White Mesa Branch. I spoke on the first dozen verses of DC 101, and I added some Joseph Smith prophecies fulfilled. It was good to see White Mesa people again. I was thinking as much of Blanding people and all of us, as the section is good self-reflection material for all of us. DC 101:2 "I, the Lord, have suffered the affliction to come upon them … in consequence of their transgressions; 3 Yet I will own them, and they shall be mine in that day when I shall come to make up my jewels … 5 For all those who will not endure chastening … cannot be sanctified 6 … there were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires among them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances."

This was the Lord speaking of and to the saints after they were driven from Missouri, because they were not acting like saints, not treating each other like saints. Nearly 200 years later, are we doing any better? Are we acting any more like saints? The last 50 years, I thought that Blanding has the best people in the world, and it probably still does, though since Silvia became a county commissioner, I have wondered, though most of the treachery is Monticello people at Monticello people. Jarrings, contentions, envyings, strifes—all gone? Hardly. Knowing that a recently-left-the-Church soul was in the audience—

I told of Joseph Smith's prophecy to Judge Stephen A. Douglas, who was friendly to the Saints at the time. Douglas asked Joseph Smith to give him a history of the Missouri persecutions, and Joseph did for about 3 hours, and then added: "Judge, you will aspire to the presidency of the United States and if ever you turn your hand against me or the Latter-Day Saints, you will feel the weight of the hand of the Almighty upon you; and you will live to see and know that I have testified the truth to you, for the conversation of this day will stick with you through life." Well, like too many politicians, Douglas, the next decade, would say things that appeal to his audience, the misinformed Mormon-haters, aligning with the day's false anti-Mormon propaganda. In a speech in Springfield, Illinois, 1857, he called the Mormon community a loathsome disgusting cancer that should be cut out with a knife, etc. Though it seemed he should win, Stephen A. Douglas lost to Abraham Lincoln, and died 7 months later, June 1861.

I also told of when Joseph Smith was in the Missouri prison and General Doniphan had the sheriff bring Joseph Smith from the prison to his law office, for consultation about his defense. A resident of Jackson County, Missouri, came in to pay a fee and offered in payment a tract of land in Jackson County. Doniphan told him that his partner was out, but he would consult him and decide about the matter. When the Jackson County man left, Joseph Smith told General Doniphan: "Doniphan, I advise you not to take that Jackson County land in payment of the debt. God's wrath hangs over Jackson County. God's people have been ruthlessly driven from it, and you will live to see the day when it will be visited by fire and sword. The Lord of Hosts will sweep it with the besom of destruction. The fields and farms and houses will be destroyed, and only the chimneys will be left to mark the desolation."

General Doniphan said to me [Leonidas M. Lawson, Doniphan's brother-in-law] that the devastation of Jackson County forcibly reminded him of this remarkable prediction of the Mormon Prophet. That devastation was also reported by Mr. A. Saxey in a letter 1902: "In the spring of 1862 my regiment went south, and it was during that time that 'Order No. 11' was issued, but I was back there again in 1864, during the Price raid, and saw the condition of the country. The duty of executing the order was committed to Colossians W. R. Penick's regiment, and there is no doubt but that he carried it into effect, from the howl the copperhead papers made at the time. I went down the Blue river, we found houses, barns, outbuildings, nearly all burned down, and nothing left standing but the chimneys which had, according to the fashion of the time, been built on the outside of the buildings. I remember very well that the country looked a veritable desolation."

As we near the end of summer, I again feel grateful for our fruit trees. The mulberry tree gives all summer, the cherries in June, apricots in July, the two peach trees, grape vines and plum tree in August, and apples in October. Bless our fruit trees, and thanks to Heaven for their invention and annual gifts.

August 16-18, we enjoyed a **Stokes cousins reunion**. It was wonderful to see them again, such wonderful people they are. Renny, Harold, Terri, Don, Reed, Denice, Kelly, Layne, Valerie, Eric, Rita, Alan, Carrie, and some spouses came, and others on zoom—all of them such good people. Many funny stories. At one point several recounted their role in saving my brother, Alan, from drowning in a lake that reunion over 60 years ago, when Alan was 6. That account is in its chronological spot, summer of 1963.

September 4: Some **movements in education** are concerning. I spent years in education, 20 as a student and 35 teaching college classes at U of U, CEU, and USU. I wrote an English textbook after looking at or teaching from a few dozen others. Textbooks fall into 3 categories: (1) good, helpful, do the job—but a joy to read? Rarely; (2) a mixed bag of okay / helpful mixed with weak; (3) from too weak or boring to false, pernicious, subversive.

Learning is a joy or should be and can be. Learning should also be highly beneficial: it can do people good, improve lives, if learning truth. But if the information learned is false, then it can be detrimental to dangerous. Likewise, slanted indoctrination undermines truth. Too many academic views fit Isaiah 5:20 "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." I might add that no less woe comes to those who swallow the reversals, the students or societies that incorporate such nonsense into habit or belief system or societal norms or culture. Isaiah 5:20 is a decent summary of what sometimes happens in education.

For specifics, several books are full of detail. *None Dare Call It Education*, by John Stormer, documents the beginnings of efforts for "using schools to create a new social order" (title of Chapter 3) from the 1930s on, to dumb down math and science, and get God and American traditional values and morals out, replaced by humanist thinking and collectivism; the book (page 46) quotes Dewey: "Children who know how to think for themselves spoil the harmony of the collective society which is coming, where everyone is interdependent" (collective means socialist / communist). *Battle for the American Mind: Uprooting a Century of Miseducation*, by Pete Hegseth and David Goodwin, is another excellent and more recent insight into the too effective progress of the progressive reversals of good and evil.

Thomas Sowell is one of my heroes, a brilliant intellect, a black man raised in the progressive propaganda, but came to see facts and "think for himself" and recognize the phony philosophies, reversed his views, and produced several books clarifying much. Thus far, I have read three: *A Conflict of Visions* (2007), *Intellectuals and Society* (2009), *Dismantling America* (2010). Another great book is *Intellectual Morons: How Ideology Makes Smart People Fall for Stupid Ideas*, by Daniel Flynn. *One-Party Classroom: How Radical Professors at America's Top Colleges Indoctrinate Students and Undermine Democracy*, by David Horowitz and Jacob Laksin, contains much interesting food for thought, whether I entirely agree with all of it or not. The recent emphasis on Critical Race Theory is the latest tool for Marxist indoctrination via race more than economics. The increasing denigrations against the U.S. Constitution, our protection against government control and authoritarian rule, are alarming. Senator

Mike Lee's book, *Our Lost Constitution: The Willful Subversion of America's Founding Document*, is fabulous. I wonder, how many university classes include Lee's book among their readings?

Deemed by many as questionable moves, the creation of the Dept of Education in 1980 and its predecessor, Dept of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1953-1979, have made possible another unconstitutional overreach. The Constitution provides that each state be independent in managing its own educational affairs, yet the national departments grow to think they are in charge, are over the states, and tend to enforce conformance or impose educational philosophies and curriculum upon the states, with federal funds being dependent on compliance, etcetera, all of which the feds have no right to do.

My book *Morsels for the Mind* was something of a statement of independence from the textbook culture, whose products seemed a tad dry, dreary, or conformist, at the least, and too WOKE and anti-Constitutional, at the worst. At CEU, I would read through the several complimentary textbooks that were sent our way each year. Some were merely uninteresting, but others were agenda-driven, if not outright subversive to the thinking that underlies our freedoms and Judeo-Christian values. The fields of English, history, and humanities have more than their share of progressives beyond the traditional liberal thinkers, and it shows in what they write about, whereas scientists and mathematicians more often have more reason on their side, unless grants or money nudge their perspectives a bit beyond integrity. So I wrote my own book, based on thinking and reason, without political agenda. Of course, the far-left progressives now label reason and common sense as far right propaganda, just because they don't like it, calling reason unreasonable or good evil, and their evil they call good, though they do not realize their conformance to Isaiah's prediction millennia ahead of their time.

I deem the following 6 essays in *Morsels* to be among my life's best works and as good as any in other books: "Life by the Yard" is light-hearted fun; the more substantive and highly relevant to our lives: "Banning Boredom and Loving Life" has lifted many down-in-a-rut readers to more positive perspectives; "Time will Tell … on All of Us" notes the high probabilities that God is involved in the universe and in our lives; "The Federal Reserve Reserves the Right to Funnel Your Funds Their Way" unveils an international scam robbing us five different ways, a system that most people are entirely unaware of; "The Minorities and the Mixed … and No One is Left, Right?" clarifies race issues (a hot topic these days) and dismantles some misconstrued biases; "The Subconscious Mind's Role in Language Acquisition" reveals insights into English that even most English teachers are unaware of, let alone the general public.

September 6: Relevant to the above subversions of the Constitution is the upcoming 2024 election, only two months out. For 8 years, 2008-2016, Obama (my 10th cousin) lied 2 or 3 times per minute through every State of the Union address and most times when talking for any length. (We all have relatives we disagree with.) His Obamacare increased health-care costs after he said they would be reduced; he sent gas prices sky high with his war on oil and coal, and other things. Then in 2016, they had Hillary set to be next and were sure that it was sure, so they were very surprised when Trump won. Many did not like his personality—and I thought he was too mouthy at times too (though he calmed down after the assassination attempt)—yet he did so much good for the country, more than any thought he could or would. He lowered taxes, ceased the war on coal and oil, lowered gas prices to nearly half from Obama's high, reduced regulations on industry to boost the economy, closed the borders the best in decades, etc. Obama spied on Trump (tapped phones) and notes of a meeting of Obama, Biden, and FBI leaders later proved it. That was far worse than Nixon's Watergate, but did anything happen against the perpetrators? Instead, they spent 4 years trumpeting a Hillary-funded farce, accusing Trump of Russian collusion, when it was Hillary and associates who were colluding with Russia, in addition to selling our San Juan County uranium reserves to Russia.

The election of 2020—Trump vs. Biden—was mysterious in several ways. I have sat up watching election results all my adult life, six decades, and every time, they simply kept the count going through the night until they knew by wee hours who won. Yet in 2020, Trump was ahead, then a bit after midnight, Biden, who had no authority to make such a decision (was only a candidate, not president),

comes on national TV and says something like, “Everyone is tired, we’re going to shut down and rest for a couple of hours.” Yet at the new start-up time, somehow Biden was ahead? Apparently, not everyone rested or stopped counting. In fact, videos later surfaced of observers being sent home, then boxes of ballots being pulled out from under tables and piled through the machines. Chris Wallace said something on Fox just before the hiatus, saying something to show that he knew it was soon time for the “arranged” “rest.” I lost respect for him with obvious ties to the conspirators. Dinesh D’Souza’s film of *2,000 Mules* shows widespread ballot packing in swing states. I also later witnessed three different presentations and demonstrations of how easily the machines can be manipulated to change vote counts in many different ways, so as to destroy all confidence in voting machines, which were used nearly everywhere. Statisticians also noted several anomalies that suggest foul play. However, the cry immediately went up against ‘election deniers’ and was consistently orchestrated nationally, though Dems had been election deniers for decades, every time a Republican won, yet in 2020 there was lots of highly suspicious stuff. Nevertheless, Biden was said to have won and began his reign of terror and ineptitude. Or should I say his puppeteers’ reign of terror during his ineptitude, when he knew little of what was being done.

Biden’s record includes (1) immediately shutting down a pipeline and other anti-coal / oil executive orders, (2) sending gas prices back up to Obama levels; (3) opening the borders like never before by tying the hands of the border patrol and allowing the cartels to control the borders and (4) traffic tens of thousands of women and children into sex slavery and (5) enabling the cartel drugs to kill other tens of thousands of Americans more than the usual number of drug overdoses; (6) horribly botching the Afghanistan withdrawal which not only killed 13 American soldiers but also left behind billions in equipment and left hundreds of cooperative Afghans to be tortured and killed by the new rulers; (7) reviving Obama’s enriching of Iran, the primary sponsor of terror throughout the Near-East, killers of Americans and Israelis; (8) Bidenomics including the deceitfully named *Inflation Reduction Act* which caused double-digit inflation; (9) a big increase in illegal immigrant crime in many big cities; and other things. Most cannot think of one thing Biden did well. So as the 2024 election approaches, the difference between the two performances is huge. Trump did 4 years and que mala did 4 years as VP, and her views are more radical than Biden’s, but Biden was not in charge anyway. The brain-dead figurehead was puppeted by Obama or a cabal of unknowns. Never has such a huge gap between doing the nation good versus bad been presented to the electorate. In fact, beyond the horrible results that Biden and Harris inflicted upon millions, Harris promises even worse. She says she’ll tax the unrealized increased value of your home, even if you don’t sell it or ever plan to. Ridiculous! She also said she would install price controls, which always make things worse. Then she spoke of cracking down on spreaders of disinformation on social media, etc. That has been a favorite phrase of the Dems for years now. What they call disinformation is usually the truth, like Hunter Biden’s laptop in truth being his, and the corruption of Biden and his family receiving millions from China, Ukraine, and other nations for influence peddling. The mainstream media’s complicit help in hiding truth, but promoting propaganda has been obvious for decades, and she and other voices want to silence the truth-sayers, calling the truth disinformation.

Fox and Newsmax present facts straighter, the latter better, though the former has Mark Levin, Watters, Hannity, Jason Chaffetz, and often brings on Jim Jordan, Ted Cruz, Newt Gingrich, Thomas Sowell, and other smart truth-tellers. In contrast, CNN and MSNBC slant or lie every hour, can hardly be trusted. If they say truth, it is often accidental, spun, slanted or contextualized to appear quite different. Regular watchers of CNN and MSNBC are duped and seldom get accurate pictures of reality.

The gap between the Trump vs. Harris performances is so great and so clear, that it is amazing that the polls are close. How can half the nation be so uninformed? If they don’t wise up, we will all get what that half deserves. Some complain about Trump’s personality. When choosing an Army general to win a war, who cares about pleasant personality? Someone with a spine and a brain and who knows what he’s doing is needed. The fact that it is even close suggests that it is only a matter of time until the prophecy in 3 Nephi chapter 21 of cities destroyed and other prophecies of Joseph Smith are fulfilled.

September 11: 23rd anniversary of the Twin Towers attack. Today I walked from Provo's Marriott (Silvia's Utah Commissioners Association conference locale) to Smith's Food and asked for two pieces of chicken at the deli. The older gentleman who hurried to serve me was so humble and meek and pleasantly accommodating that I almost felt like crying in being so moved by his meekness and humility. It's hard to describe the feeling from such a simple exchange, but I got a feel for how pleased God is with us, when we simply do our best in all humility, meekness and lowliness. Pride ruins; humility beautifies.

September 18: This morning a joyous gratitude was instilled in me, realizing how truly blessed I am: plenty of good food to eat, comfortable house paid for in a pleasant peaceable nearly crime-free town of good people, able to enjoy a relatively relaxing retirement, few deadlines, seldom have to hurry too much, lots of interesting things to learn and some time to study and learn it, decent health, am pain free—so much to be grateful for and how foolish of us not to be aware and be grateful. Later the same day, as I watched the Tabernacle choir sing *Tuya Es La Gloria*, another beautiful gift of realization: the wonderful infinite value of women, His daughters, a depth of appreciation not transferable with words.

September 27: Silvia noticed that when the football team runs onto the field carrying American flags, that the first 40 have flags, but about 25 do not. She volunteered us to provide another 25 so that all could carry one. We went to work, she ordered the flags, I bought the 1x2 poles, cut them to length, sanded them, she painted them, I bought the screws and washers for attaching them, but the flags had not arrived yet by the morning of the homecoming game. However, they arrived that day, so as we watched Jace catch a pass and run 30 yards for a touchdown for the C-team game (3-5 pm), we wanted to tell Coach Christensen that the flags did arrive and we would have them at the stadium by 6 pm, an hour before game time. As I was leaving the stands to go tell him that, Silvia wanted to check how I was going to say it, where, when, etcetera; she is often nervous that I might not say things just right (though I do fine most of the time). So I went and talked to the coaches, explaining that the flags arrived and we would have them ready and here about 6. When I got back to my seat, Silvia asked me what I said. I reported, "I told him that we would meet at 426 west 200 north at 6:13 pm and if he had the proper papers, we would give him the flags." Perhaps that's the 2nd time I teased. (The first is at 1986.) It was nice to see all 65 football players run out carrying flags that homecoming game.

October 5: Wonderful conference! Neil Andersen talked on passed-on children, and Dallin Harris Oaks on 'being peacemakers' that 'contention be done away'. As county commissioner, Silvia likes (1) the good that she can do for the people and (2) the good people she meets and works with in the county and the state. I am her chauffeur, body guard (though too old or weak, if strength were needed), and press secretary (if I were allowed to say anything)—so I am mainly only chauffeur, attending a few events as her insignificant other. Another perk(?) of being a commissioner or her insignificant other is the extra practice to 'Love those mad at you, bless them that curse you, do good to them that vent when ticked, and pray for those who despise or speak evil of you' Matthew 5:44. I paraphrase a bit, as I don't think all her critics consider her an enemy or hate her, though some seem to.

As I watch Silvia do meetings, read hundreds of pages relevant to upcoming issues, work 70 hours a week at the part-time job, and perform a surprising variety of duties, and all in a 2nd language (English), I am impressed. If people only knew what she goes through. She has succeeded through a series of accomplishments. As a newly arrived immigrant, she first learned English, then obtained citizenship, then learned how to drive, then finished and graduated from Provo High School, then she graduated from Weber State with a BA and teacher certificate with a major in Spanish and a minor in child development, and then an MA in marriage and family development from USU, then she worked and taught at CEU for 20 years, and is now a San Juan County commissioner.

"The Setting of Soul and Sun" is a poem I wrote some years after Joseph's death.

THE SETTING OF SOUL AND SUN

People take for granted, the glory of the sun.
They freely use its light, as all about they run.

Till the brilliance of its setting, none note the light of day,
Till the colors, fine and soft, bloom in full array,

When the sunset blossoms in glorious, delicate overlay!
Only then we see the beauties of our sun, at the close of day.

Unknown till dusk, is the value of the dawn,
As the value of a soul, on friends doth dawn,
Who remain behind, in the darkness of the night,
Mourning the prized, passed-on light.

As the goodness of the sun, is unnoticed in the day,
So the goodness of a soul, is o'erlooked while in the way.

Blinded by its brightness, till the splendor of its setting,
As the beauty of the person, till the hour of departing;

The glow of the day, best known in closing;
The glow of the soul, best known in reposing;

The value of the light, best known in the night;
The value of the lamp, cherished in the plight,
Of the final flickerings, of the last little oil,
Of the fallen flame, in lamp, horizon, or soil.

The following is out of its 1990 chronological order. Not long after Joseph's death, 1990 or 1991, I attended some conference in Denver with Carl Osborn, and I saw on Denver's local news or read in the paper (or both) of a young couple whose toddler son, 3 or 4, walked out of the house in the night and was killed by dogs. Horribly tragic. Still weighed with my own grief increased my grief for them. I felt so bad for them. I went out of my way to visit them on the way home, in some community outside of Denver. I did not say much. They invited me in, but they did not feel like talking. They sat quiet in grief with heads bowed. I too sat, simply feeling bad with them. I was there maybe 20 minutes. I said very little, but like them, I too sat silent most of the time. Maybe I was more an intruder than a comfort. Their depths were such that my presence seemed immaterial. Awkward? Neutral? Unwelcome? Empathetically helpful at all? I don't know. Poor couple, so young, in such grief.

October 2024, I finished Ron Eberling's life history. The Lord's hand in his life is repeatedly apparent. I wrote for him the following 'about the author' on the back of his book:

"How many people have been shot at three different times, have lassoed buffalo from a helicopter, have met a rattlesnake or Gila monster face to face, have been stung by a scorpion, have been surrounded by killer wild dogs, have bagged 61 elk, have done missionary work that attracted the notice of Europe's leading Protestant, who came to work against him, but was persuaded to read the Book of Mormon? How many bathed in a river three months of every year, or dug oneself out from under an avalanche with a hatchet? All with God's help, he often adds.

Ron Eberling's life is interesting, candid, exemplary, usual in ways and unusual in other ways. Recognizing God's hand in our lives and trying to do right enough to merit His help in our lives are important. His life is exemplary that way. He inherited many qualities from his parents, whose

interesting lives he also summarizes: his dad's work ethic, toughness, courage, cowboying and life skills, and honesty; and his mom's durability through WWII and harsh environments and circumstances like many never live through. His wife, Janice, has also been a faithful companion in sharing and bearing their burdens and joys through life.

Candidly, he admits imperfections, but decided to change early in life and experienced a definite change of heart, after which a focused determination to do right and do people good characterized the rest of his life.

Much of his life was usual—school, farm boy, sports, college, being an exceptional mechanic and cowboy, earning a living to support a family—but much else was very unusual, as summarized in the first paragraph above.

Ron's life history adheres closely to his journal accounts, quite usual in style, succinct, and with gaps in time later filled in with other memories worth recording. Ron reminds me of Revelations 3:16, because whatever he may or may not be, Ron Eberling is NOT lukewarm, as one learns from his life history—a remarkable, interesting, and worthwhile read." —by Brian Stubbs

Nov 3: A new friend, Alvin Hiram Andrew, and I exchanged life histories. I received his PDF last night and could hardly put it down. Very interesting. A highly capable person, an engineer in several capacities, also taught religion classes at BYU, wrote a book, an athlete, a coach, helped with engineering analyses for the SLC 2002 Olympics, he and his wife raised 5 boys, etc. We also noticed many parallels of our lives: born same year, both started as math/science guys (he kept going) but later published books relative to scripture, both wanted to do Southwest Indian Mission (but he was called to CA), both did 20 years as Seventies / missionaries, both had a major health scare amid an otherwise healthy life, neither thrived at selling, both taught at high school and college levels, etc. He also writes well his perceptive perspectives of life situations. His life is another witness of God's hand in our lives. If published someday, it is worth the read.

Nov 10: A new sister missionary, Sister Ness, from Oregon spoke in church today. Her parents or grandparents had joined the church in Oregon, and she told of her mother going to the university and having to take a philosophy class. First day the professor asked, "How many of you believe in God?" Two-thirds of the class raised their hands. He said that his goal was to have none of the students raising their hands by the end of the term, and that all who believe in God by the final will flunk. Each Friday quiz he added the question 'do you believe in God?' and asked for a raise of hands. Fewer and fewer each week raised their hands. Some classmates admitted to her that they still believed in God, but didn't want to flunk, so quit raising their hands and answered the question how the professor wanted. She studied hard and did well in all aspects except that one question. At the end of the term, her mom was the only one who answered 'yes' on the final and she did flunk, but she was not going to deny that she knew that God lives. That mother's experience—and bravo for her—raised several questions in my mind about the teacher, a tad touched on top.

First was the reminder of how stupid philosophers can be sometimes. I dabbled in philosophy some, read 2 or 3 books on it, mainly because philosophy is linked with linguistics in ways, both dealing with how the mind works in dealing with realities like language, etc. Much of philosophy is logical and reasonable, but sometimes it branches into so-called "reasoning" that is not reason at all nor logical at all, but weird stuff. Philosophers are supposed to be "thinkers" and many are, but some are into very make-believe thinking. And I am familiar with the prevalence in various humanities' disciplines (since English teachers are stuck in humanities) of how illogical some humanities' 'thinking' can be.

Second, that professor graded on a one-word answer. Yay or nay in any humanities class is ludicrous. He should have added 'Explain why or why not'; and let the students explain their thinking, which sometimes would have been superior to the professor's thinking, and he should recognize it. Through all humanities, the reasoning and arguments behind something are the real substance of an answer, the strength of one's thinking, not yay or nay. Whether in literature interpretation or social

studies views or Law or politics (I won't say political science because science is seldom involved), the strength of an answer is the reasoning behind it, the math and science when applicable, the strength of the supports or arguments behind the yay or nay. That leads me to—

Third, I would have flunked too and then would have gone to the department head and the president of the university and the board of trustees, and if those were not impacted, then maybe the campus newspaper, public newspapers, and news stations to lay out my case in writing how foolish of a professor they had hired and why. I don't get that annoyed by very many things, but flunking students for believing in God is one of them. Maybe it relates to my disenchantment with academia generally—laden with fools, not a few, who think they're smart. Some are smart and decent thinkers, but not all. In high school, I loved learning but hated school—did not want to go to college, because school seemed too much jumping through hoops, busy work, and too often detached from reality, except math and the sciences I liked. Math and science are more necessarily grounded in reason and reality, much else seemed a tad suspect. Construction, computers, medicine, plumbing, electricians, farming, and most tech fields are also math and science based. Linguistics or language science is nearer to a real science than political science or the social sciences, but not always as solid as "the" sciences, like math, physics, chemistry, etc. Though I disliked school, I'm glad Silvia encouraged me, and 3 degrees later I'm glad I did. I enjoyed 1/3 of the undergrad classes and nearly all the grad classes, but the last straw at the other end of my education, when the professor took my scholarship from me to give it to his girlfriend—that additional lunacy on top of several other observations was enough to again obliterate friendly sentiment for academia. Luckily, I already had the education (BA, MA, classes done and passed the comprehensive exams for a PhD and could do the research) and was just contemplating dissertation topics when that happened, and at that point, I had no interest in doing a dissertation for an institution peppered with a few corrupt professors and several more rather weird professors swimming in the world's philosophies and whose thinking is far detached from reality. The philosophies of men mingled with bits of truth, so to speak.

Then I slid into English via the back door. ESL is the marketable branch of linguistics, so I first taught English to 2nd language learners, but then colleagues and administration realized that I could teach all English classes (but I did not want to teach literature). Yet being in humanities, at multi-campus meetings and conferences and receiving complementary copies of dozens of English textbooks, I waded through humanities most of my life. Some essays in the complementary textbooks were good to brilliant, and I used most of those in class, but many others were full of faulty thinking, swimming in ideologically slanted non-realities or creating their own realities. That is another reason I wrote my own book, *Morsels*, to be more grounded in reality, reason, and thinking, but we did read lots of other authors' works too, some of the best as good examples of thinking and some of the worst as bad examples of thinking. Three rebuttals to the faulty thinking of top international intellects in humanities are in *Morsels* 3, 17, and 23.

Fourth, the holes in the professor's logic are huge. In *Morsels*, number 28 "Time Will Tell … on All of Us" deals with that whole issue. When one abides in God, the witnesses increase as the degree of abiding. Furthermore, when 95 answers to 100 consecutive prayers, whose probabilities range from ½ to a millionth and are then multiplied together, the math proves God. The evidences overwhelm, and even more so when striving to abide. The problem is that atheists usually arrive at their conclusions because of no interest in abiding, and going away from His light puts one in varying degrees of darkness, and believing that there is no God is more comfortable or might seem reasonable by how one feels when far from abiding. However, many things—bi-gender reproduction (pages 95-97 in *Morsels*) and the eye and many other intricacies demolish evolution as taught. There is mild evolution, but all things together fall heavily on the side of intelligent design, probabilities heavily favoring a Very Intelligent Creator.

In short, a professor so illogical as to flunk students for believing in God has huge holes in his logic and has no business being a college professor who enforces such stupidity in an academic setting, and especially not in philosophy, supposedly the science of "thinking" or "love of wisdom."

November 14: One year since my surgery. Silvia told me that Larry Lee had passed away, another younger than me. Both he and his father Lynn Lee did for us and our CEU campus a lot of good.

Lynn Lee stuck up for Silvia, and Larry Lee directed the maintenance crew's building the daycare building. His wife said that Larry would do anything for Silvia. He was a good friend. Eugene Pehrson and successive campus deans Kay Shumway, Gail Glover, Don Larson, and Bob McPherson were all helpful and solidly in her corner when needed.

November 16: Silvia had state meetings at Bryce (we left Wednesday, came back Sunday). From Bryce's Ruby Inn bookstore to Cedar City's Deseret Book, I only bought 11 books (extraordinary self-restraint). They're all interesting ones, of course. Also saw Ty Redd at Cedar iHop. It was good to see him. Now a SUU professor, about to retire, he always credits me with motivating him or launching his career. He was in my algebra class 40 years ago and got excited about learning and math, in that class.

Saturday we watched SJHS take state in football, fourth year in a row, beating Emery 60-14. It was cold! Intermittent snow all day and cold and windy to boot. Most of us had 2 or 3 or 4 layers of coats, sweatshirts, etc. Then Mace Knight walks into the stadium in a T-shirt. My tennis shoes and socks were wet from the snow and walking wet sidewalks over the day, then sitting in the cold for 4 hours combined to give me frozen feet and feeling colder than I had felt in a long time. I had just bought and read some of the book, *A History of Utah's American Indians*, edited by Forrest Cuch, with a couple of chapters by Bob McPherson. I felt so bad for the Shoshone people slaughtered at the Bear River Massacre in January, counts varying from 250 to 493. A Franklin, ID, store owner helped the Shoshone. Could it have been our ancestor Samuel Rose Parkinson? He had the co-op for a time. A few survivors escaped and made their way to other Shoshone groups. Not sure what kind of attire or footwear, if any, they had on when the early morning raid began that sub-zero morning, but how did the survivors from bullets survive the cold? Walking some days to elsewhere, no sleeping bags, sub-zero nights, what clothing, or shoes / moccasins? During the cold football game, I reflected on the Shoshone and Goshutes doing life all winter every winter in hut-like housing and clothing nothing like ours. Life for them must have been cold 24-7 all winter long every winter, and in ID and northern UT, no less! I was in awe at what they went through. And I thought I was cold?

Nov 23: Drove to SLC Thursday for Silvia's meeting Friday, then drove from SLC back to Blanding after meetings. Played the string trio with Katherine Hiatt and Annette Adams at the evening meeting of Stake Conference. Many were surprised, did not know that I played cello. I admitted to some that my cello playing has been sporadic, that I practiced diligently 6th through 8th grades, but only occasionally through the rest of life. For example, I once played in a string quartet for a wedding at the East Sharon Stake Center in Provo. Then packed up my cello and set it aside to enjoy refreshments and visit with people. Then I went home, forgetting my cello. Five years later, I was asked to play for something, but could not find my cello. I thought and thought, where could it be? Where did I last see it? The Stake Center wedding reception came to mind. I was living in Blanding, so Mom went to the Stake Center and asked. The janitor said, "Yes, we had a cello hanging around here for 2 or 3 years, but no one claimed it, so we donated it to the Provo High orchestra. So Mom went to Provo High, where Terry Hill happened to be the orchestra teacher, and he was the violist in the string quartet I had performed in 5 years earlier. He said, "Yes, we received this cello from the Stake Center a couple of years ago and spent some money fixing it up, but if it's Brian's, you can have it back." Bless Mom for all she does for us kids. So we recovered my cello that I had misplaced 5 years earlier. That shows how often I practiced.

Nov 25, Monday: Walking laps around the Wellness Center, I finished composing an arrangement of "Silent Night." Brother Ward wants a string quartet to play Silent Night as part of the Christmas program, with no piano. To Austin Pincock, a good high-school violist, I gave a nice active viola part, Katherine Hiatt and Lydia Nielson do the high slow pretty parts with occasional fun spots, taking turns on the routine melody, and a simple cello part for me—a perk of being the composer, write me an easy part.

Dec 7: Returned from enjoying Shana and family and Julia's concert. Got home and we rehearsed the quartet piece—sounds as good as I imagined it when walking laps. It is the first time I liked Silent Night. Silent Night has always struck me as ok nice, but slow and a tad boring, not as beautiful as O Holy

Night and Mary's Boy Child, so I enlivened Silent Night a bit. Dad's 99th birthday. Watched a special on Pearl Harbor, Dad's 16th birthday. It is moving what so many went through to keep the world free.

Dec 15: Silvia and I spoke in Church, assigned topic: Christmas. I used Nephi's nativity narrative in first Nephi 11-14. It went ok, though not as planned. Kinda skatiwampus, I thought. But Bishop Steve Wilcox said afterwards that he learned more from that talk than any he had heard. Glad someone liked it.

Dec 21: Steve Wilcox passed away this morning. Got pneumonia, was put in the hospital, then life-flighted to SLC, lasted some more hours, but finally got to rest after a good hard life.

Dec 22: Today, by request of choir director, we quartet played my Silent Night arrangement.

Dec 28: Fasted for Mack and Silvia and others in the county, that the truth prevail and that the humble doers of good be exonerated from much misplaced blame.

Dec 30: Steve Wilcox's funeral was good. A good man in a good place. We were neighbors over 40 years. Then at the cemetery also, Steve, Janet, and their son Aaron, are all next to Joseph, Silvia, and me. As I shook their hands down the line, I said, "Nice to see the Wilcox boys all together again." One said, "Yes, our probation officers let us all out for the funeral." All five children who spoke got choked up while talking about their love for their dad and what he taught them. Steve was always serving, and one told how the boys were voluntold to help. One said, "The way I knew that I was the favorite child is because my teachers and parents were always calling each other to talk about me." Janet Wilcox has been a great friend to Silvia over the years. Silvia once surmised that in the pre-earth life when she was told she'd live most of her life in Blanding, she was not overly thrilled, but then Heavenly Father told her, "but I'll give you Janet Wilcox for a friend and neighbor." Then Silvia said, "Okay, I'll go."

2025 January 7: The new Commissioner, Lori Maughan, was sworn in, and they invited public comment. I went to the front, congratulated all, and told how I enjoyed hearing of Commissioner Bruce Adams speak of his former 5th-grade students, dozens or hundreds of them, doing good all over the state. Then I mentioned that now, all three San Juan County Commissioners—Jamie Harvey, Silvia Stubbs, Lori Maughan—all are my former students. Then Silvia commented that she was the student who took care of my kids, fixed my meals, and still got a B. I admitted sleeping on the couch a bit. Now is as good a time as any to say a few words about—

Silvia and her gifts: I did not know it when I married her, but I seem to have paired with a spiritually gifted person. (Everyone gets surprises, so surprises in the plus are always nice.) Silvia often has premonitions and dreams of things to be, as do her daughters at times. More than once, she dreamed that a child was coming a person's way before the person knew it. They'd so 'no, not so'. Then the pregnancy or adoption would follow. She has seen in dream or vision each of our children and grandchildren before they came and got a sense of their personalities. She heard God's voice comfortingly call her new name while suffering during Joseph's birth. You would think being married to a prophetess would keep her hubby humble! I try. She may not be perfect yet, and her generosity and fiscal exuberance can occasionally benefit from the calming, mathematically sound (frugal), wise, logical voice of reason (that's me) to prevent fiscal difficulties quite avoidable with a little calculatory forethought, but hey—someone has to have his feet on the ground (calculator in head) to complement the visionary head in the Heavens. So we're a good team—most of the time—she has the visions and dreams, and I do the math to see how many of them we can afford. Outside of giving away my pickup, her generosity is admirable.

A most crucial example of her listening to the spirit is once when walking to work in the pre-dawn hours in Buenos Aires (age 20) while living with Bisseggers, which story is told at the end of 1996.

Another time, she and Bisseggers were driving by a hospital, and Silvia told them that a certain ward member was in the hospital. They asked her what made her think so? She had heard it from no one, but just knew. It turned out that she was right.

Once while at U of U, Silvia prayed that we might come into a little extra money. That afternoon I came home and told her I had found a $5 bill on the sidewalk. She shouted for joy! Then I finished the story. I left it there because it was not mine and I did not want to disappoint the rightful owner in case he

or she came back looking for it, but seconds later 3 guys walking behind me also shouted for joy. So much for the rightful owner! She said next time she would pray that He send it her way, not my way.

Jan 9: The monthly meeting of the county planning and zoning board, that Silvia and I have been attending for two years, is usually attended by 4 or 5 of us besides the board. This one had 100 people, standing room only for 20 or so. They usually last 2 or 3 hours; this one lasted 5 ½, from 6 pm to nearly midnight. The public comment lasted more than an hour. The board were set to pass a zoning ordinance that originally had limits of livestock per acre (global government-like guidelines), which ludicrous limits were taken out before the meeting started, but the people wanted to voice their opinions anyway. Limits of livestock per acre is NOT a good idea for a rural county whose livelihoods largely depend on cattle, ranching, agriculture, etc. So 100 people came. About 30 of them spoke strongly with many good points. A great meeting. Most on the board are good conservative common-sense San Juaners, but the planning and zoning administrator, who pulled those new regs in from somewhere, seems on the side of the extreme environmentalists with global warming slant of anti-beef, anti-agriculture, animal limits, etcetera. The board works hard with many complex situations, and I admire them. It is not them; it seems a new philosophy of land labeling has overcome or come over our county maps—from where?

Though some of the comments were a tad overboard and word had not spread that the animal limit was taken out (the day before), county citizens let their opinions fly anyway, and good for them! Whoever snuck in those animal limits in this ranching / agricultural county, needed to hear all that. Many good comments came out, like against the ordinance that allows only 1 RV on whatever area. It was mentioned that when family comes home from hard times and needs a place to live, any roof is better than homelessness. Rising rents, regs, and inflation, but no rise in income, or a loss of job hits many people hard. The government is always talking about trying to prevent homelessness and help the homeless. If so, then let them live in trailers or RVs on a relative's property, 3 or 4 if needed, on 5 or 20 acres in the country! Why not? Much better than homeless on the streets of LA, SF, SLC, or San Juan County.

Jan 13: Now and then experiences happen in which one can understand how a youngster could grow up hating life and people. When parents or teachers or peers or most people in their lives are habitually cross, picking on them, angry with, or critical of them, who can blame them for adapting by adopting a hardened demeanor and attitude of wanting nothing to do with people or authority?

Jan 21: 100 or so again attended the county commission meeting, 30 or 40 voiced views, a little more calm than last Thursday, and the commission rightly sent the land-use ordinance back to Planning & Zoning. Silvia works so conscientiously at her job as commissioner, and in a 2nd language!

Jan 22: Another random memory out of chronological order is that in my 40s and 50s, I could nearly outrun a car to work. Leaving my house 365 W 100 S, I would see a car pass in front of me going south through the intersection 1st S and 4th W. I would take off and run the 3 ½ blocks to the old solar-adobe classroom building before the person in the car drove the 4 blocks, parked, and got to the front door. Whatever First South residents saw me sprinting past their window probably just thought I was late for class. Another time I was running to the North Chapel and Renae Pincock's car passed me about 3 blocks away. I sprinted the last 3 blocks, almost keeping up with her car, unbeknownst to her, and I was at the chapel door as she was getting out of her car. She screeched in surprise.

Jan 27: Substituted at seminary today. Enjoyed it! Good kids! We covered DC 6, which led to a tangent on translation, language, and evidences for the Book of Mormon. I love tangents. So do the students.

Feb 1: Yesterday returned from SLC 4-day trip to the Capitol exhausted. I hauled the stuff in from the car and went to bed at 7 pm. The San Juan Record (Jan 29) was full of land-use ordinance news, the first three pages having the longest article I have ever seen in that paper. Pete Black and Jean Bayles both had insightful letters to the editor. I quote a few spots from each:

Pete Black's letter to San Juan County planning administrator Kristen Bushnell contains the following excerpts: "… with the adoption of this ordinance, you would … oversee my property and have the right to "allow" or "disallow" almost anything I may wish to do. … rather than giving you this

authority, I would like … to retain it for myself, since the property was purchased with my own blood, sweat and tears, without any county help. … the rules already in place seem to have served us well over the years. … a better approach might be to … revise existing rules as necessary, rather than simply attempt to delete all of them and start over as your proposed ordinance appears to do. In view of these concerns, and others, I hope you will understand why I, along with many others, are encouraging our elected commissioners to refuse to adopt the ordinance you have proposed." Yes!!!!!

Jean Bayles: "The decision about a resolution should then be taken to the people involved—through the voting process … Those decisions involving the lives and livelihoods and freedoms of individual citizens should not be proposed by a commission … and declared county policy with an enforcement arm by a committee of three. As has been said, "The best government is that which governs least." As we watch the egregious and increasing encroachment on our rights by the government at many levels, all under the banner of "the common good" and edicts which come down from "authorities who know best" we can see where this leads us. From a BLM which usurps our decision-making rights over local issues to an autocratic EPA which threatens to regulate even a pond on our own property, to every level of government which claims the right to close our businesses and our churches and our schools for an unfounded "solution" to a health threat, we have come close to a servile condition … controlled by the government. We live in a country which once valued individual freedom above all. Let's not fall into the deadly trap of abandoning those values here in San Juan County. If we don't think clearly and act accordingly, we will."

Feb 4: Fasted both Sunday and today, Tuesday, for Silvia and Mack and for truth for today's commission meeting, as past and present details of the larger picture were concerning. I pray every day for Silvia, Mack, and truth (be known), and Th Feb 6, the Lord lifted my burden and cheered me so as not to be so weighed by multiple unfairnesses put against Silvia, Mack, and truth. No one knows how well Silvia does in the face of so much.

Feb 7: This morning drove home from SLC in great gratitude to our Father Above for answers to prayer. After fasting and praying for Silvia and Mack and for truth be known and for the county's good, at Tuesday's commission meeting, the new county attorney tried another contrary-to-proper-procedure by pushing a contract that was never approved, contrary to procedure and wisdom—a contract for an extra worker in land use under Bushnell. First of all, the land use ordinance is far from decided. No need for anything until that is established. Second, the land-use position was half time; then it was made full-time for Bushnell (that's already a generous increase), then she turned it into liberal environmental overreach, and has asked for 2 or 3 additional helpers (1 for enforcing). The previous PZ administrator, sat at the side and let the Planning and Zoning committee do their work and discussions, and simply answered questions and did the paper work for them, yet Bushnell seems to rule and direct the PZ committee, does more talking than the 7 of them together. County Attorney Maughan seems on her side, came to commission meeting instead of her? Third, the procedure is that the commission decides whether to approve a job and then HR and Mack and dept head look at budget, decide on a salary range, then advertise the job and then interview the applicants and then select one and then put together a contract for that person. Attorney Maughan has it exactly backwards. He decides who he wants, draws up a contract, and hands it to the county commission to approve. No, it doesn't work that way. Well, the other 2 commissioners caved, Commissioner Maughan is his sister-in-law and Harvey did not really know what else to do, but Silvia said, "No, I can't vote for this. Why did Bushnell not come? This has not gone through the proper process."

Feb 8: Nellene Parry Jones Heinz burial (funeral was in Price). Nellene's sister Elaine Parry Johnson and Chris Johnson came by to say 'Hi.' They moved to Cedar City years ago. It was so nice to see them again. Chris and I went to Lincoln Jr High together in Orem, and he was principal of ARL Middle School when Joseph went through, and later a bishop in Cedar City in his 70s, and 3 or 4 of their children had been my students: Dane, Heather, and Kristi, at least. Good people.

Feb 21, Friday: Returned from SLC Capitol meetings exhausted again, hauled the stuff in, lay down at 5 pm and woke up 8:30, had slept 3 and ½ hours, waking up in time for bedtime.

March 2, Sunday: Silvia, Shana, Julia, and Cienna are in Washington DC, where Silvia has meetings. I am to pick them up at SLC airport Tuesday. Instead of driving the Blanding-Provo distance 2 extra times, I decided to enjoy Provo 4 days. Enjoyed visits with Dan Dewey, chair of the linguistics dept, and with Shon Hopkins, chair of the Ancient Scriptures branch of the religion dept, and with David Calabro, a very good Semitic-and-Egyptian scholar, also in the religion dept. He went into those ancient languages after reading my articles when he was in high school in the 1980s. I also bought 3 more books in the Nibley series to read, hiked the Y, and got a creamery ice cream cone. A nice vacation. I also went to the home ward, Pleasant View 3rd, where we attended when I was in high school. Not really expecting a chance-meeting with descendants of any whom I knew 60 years ago (most are in the PV III in the sky), I looked anyway, but did not recognize anyone. However, Palmer Gutke was seated right behind me, Carl and Audrey Gutke's son, and Dennis and Lurlene Gutke's grandson. What a pleasant surprise! Wonderful family the Gutkes are. Dennis is a spiritual man, mentioned herein (1989-90), and worked at CEU with Silvia and me. Lurlene is one of Silvia's favorite people: they worked together in RS, and Silvia did student-teaching under Lurlene at the elementary school. Deniane Gutke Kartchner is an endorser of *Morsels* and is cited in this work. Hayden worked for Scott Gutke at BYU. Good people, good friends.

March 6: Last night had a dream about the 6th time in a decade. I dreamed that a new musical was scheduled to begin that night, but I had not finished writing it yet, and was stressing to finish the script or a song for the actors to learn that afternoon. I wondered how I got in such a predicament so unprepared! Stressful! What a relief to awake and realize that it was not scheduled at all. I have had that dream a few times the last several years. Is it meaningless? Or do I need to finish the 7th musical that I started 8 years ago and finish revising the others for publication? I should work that direction.

March 11: Found the obituary of Raymond Felix, my mission companion in Whitewater, NM, a wonderful, kind, humble fellow, like the obituary says. Our winter in NM is at 1969-70. I was able to contact and enjoy some back-and-forth with some of his children, who seem as quality as he is. I also found the obituary of Von White, my companion in the LTM and at Mexican Water and another good man, but could not establish contact with his family.

March 15: Silvia's commissioner job is hard in dealing with subversives or watching some people be mean to others and sometimes to her. Her burdens are great. Between her sorrows and burdens, and my children's burdens—all 4 are laden—and the poor grandchildren take their turns in getting acquainted with life's lumps and bumps, and then add the voices speaking evil of my work, when they know not what they're talking about, and the ruthlessness of secret combinations—global, national, and county—upon the innocent and peaceable, life is a seemingly endless string of sorrows and burdens for so many. I often get to a point of not even wanting to be happy until it can be more permanent. Occasional reprieves from heaviness are brief, a few hours, but then almost immediately comes news of another jarring or attack or burden or sad news. So few breaks from heaviness in later life if one is aware of very much. Is ignorance bliss? But I'd rather know and know who to pray for, though unable to do much else. At times I get so weary of members judging or attacking other members, sometimes falsely accusing them when the truth is that those accused are doing well, doing good, while the accusers are the wrong-doers. (See August 11, 2024.) It's enough to make one not trust hardly anyone and want to withdraw from people, the unjust judgers that many are, though most are good most of the time.

March 22: About 5 days ago my left wrist hurt, could not use my left hand at all. Thought maybe I had slept on it wrong. Or did I prune fruit trees too vigorously, holding branches too tightly too long, holding too much weight (me) during precarious leans in the Mulberry tree as I sawed with the right hand? Later the left hand could not lift a pamphlet. So I went to Dr Joe yesterday, got a hand brace, which felt wonderful, preventing all the movements that were painful. We also decided to do blood tests for fun. Fun? Kidneys excellent, blood pressure great 128/77, white blood cells up some, but PSA 14?!? It's supposed to be 1 after the surgery.

Today I went to do my assigned chapel-cleaning duty. Due to a useless left hand, I asked for a one-hand job like vacuuming. Was assigned to vacuum classrooms. Someone else did halls, another did chapel, another did restrooms. I was only half finished when it seemed very quiet. Yes, it had been over an hour, so I looked around and no one was there. I guess I was so slow that they all left. So I did the RS room (where they **would** notice) and then left the last hall of youth classrooms undone (where they'd probably not notice). That'll show'em. As if anyone cared or knew. I tired easily. It seems I always tire easily any more. I had an elevated white blood cell count in early 2023 also, and I always get out of breath more easily the last 2 or 3 years. What might I have? I do have mortality, which is terminal, the slow-progressing kind. I'll do what I can till I can't.

March 24: Boyd Laws passed away, a very good man, 4 years younger than me. He hadn't come back from the ranch, so his wife sent son John, John's youngest son Dawson, and son-in-law Jason Torgerson to check on him. He was dead, sitting in his truck. Lou Ann Laws Grover has her brother coming home weeks before her husband comes, who has been lying in bed, for weeks weak with cancer.

April 3: Shana was sought by Apostle Christofferson, who also served his mission in Argentina. She had left a comment on a Facebook post of his, and he wanted to quote part of it in his conference talk this Saturday evening Apr 5. His secretary finally connected them. He asked about her life. She said she served a mission in Argentina and her daughter had and her mother grew up and joined the Church in Argentina. He asked if her mother is still alive. Yes, she's 76 and is now a county commissioner in Utah.

April 4: Silvia and I occasionally dream of retiring again someday. How would it be to walk, read, write, and watch TV? I watch mostly Newsmax, Fox, science or history documentaries, what little time I sit by TV. I never just watch, always read / study / write while watching. Silvia watches a hallmark movie now and then, and I'm okay to watch them with her, while doing something else also. I like them more than most movies, simply because people are pleasant and kind to each other most of the time. Other movies have heaps of hard hearts, meanness, tempers, manipulators, violence, double-cross, sarcasm, frowns, intimidators, etc. Hallmark at least has people being kind and pleasant mostly, until the antagonist or manipulator working against the pleasant dreams tries to buy the establishment and destroy its unique quaint wonderfulness, but those bad guys only appear briefly or speak their vile plans a minute or two. And usually 20 minutes before the end (1:40 into the 2 hours) is the misunderstanding, blow-up, or misinterpretation of some overheard conversation or rumor that overturns the happiness that the movie had been working toward for nearly 2 hours. That takes 15 to 18 minutes to resolve, a rather anxious wait for those who care or pay attention, but I ignore and read my book until the stupid misunderstanding is cleared up and they start being pleasant again, the last minute. They kiss the last minute, and everything is wonderful for 30 seconds. I keep waiting for the "live happily ever after" part, but they barely get there then the movie ends. Does "happily ever after" usually only last 30 seconds? So I enjoy most of the first 1:40, then read 15 minutes while the hullabaloo happens, then watch the last happy minute.

It's also interesting that the prima donna is always superbly qualified in some superior career—corporate executive, inheritor of a wonderful family business started generations ago, or is a writer / author—never a homeschooling mom or parking meter reader or elementary school cafeteria help. The frequent writer role is expectable, since the writers of the movies are writers and see writers at the top of the societal artsy ladders, though ladders not secured can put one in the bushes, and many hopeful writers find themselves crawling out of the bushes. A small percent of would-be writers actually earn a living at it, the rest of us do something else to feed the family. But I'm not really a writer; I simply write-up the research, which is the supremely challenging endeavor. Most writers are fiction writers. How many more alternate realities do we need? Politicians create a few and anti-Mormon propagandists create a few more. Most great novels are reality related, but research best deals with reality, then I write up the findings for the few interested; and I write life histories, for the even fewer interested in those.

The main drawback of hallmark movies is the enormous difference between me and a hallmark guy—huge gap! Charm? I am the charm-challenged chap who wrote: Some people have charm; the rest of us get through life as best we can. Considerate? I think so, sort of, roughly speaking, 'roughly' being

the key word there. I try. But I don't do long walks of wonderful small talk very well. I mostly say 'yes' or 'no'—actually mostly 'yes' and 'yes dear', which is quite hallmarky, isn't it? Misunderstandings? Not as stupid as hallmark's misunderstandings, or not very often. Like I said in the life history, when we met, Silvia was learning English and I was learning Spanish, then the government threatened to deport her, so we married 3 days later, 2 months after we met. A tad tiny in timeframe, but we were making good progress learning each other's language, and by now our communication skills are coming right along. Sometimes our children are around and translate for us what the other really meant, and that helps.

April 6: A wonderful General Conference again: Henry Eyring used DC 88:63 and DC 100:1 in a way that came to me more clearly; Uchtdorf's talk good as usual; Todd Christofferson said Shana's quote at the Saturday evening meeting and our cousin Andrew Crane led the choir; Bednar gave a superb overview of the restoration and prophecies fulfilled by it; was it Steven Shumway who said God may ask in Heaven 'who did you bring with you?'; Dallin Harris Oaks always good and jumping out at me was 'preferring to suffer wrong than to do wrong'; then Russell M. Nelson gave a wonderful talk on Charity.

April 9: Marjorie Haun wrote an excellent letter to the editor in the SJR newspaper about the Land Use, Development, and Management Ordinance (LUDMO), which deals only with unincorporated areas, not towns and not the Reservation. I quote parts: "The 129-page document [LUDMO] … more closely resembles a suburban HOA contract than it does an ordinance for a sparsely-populated county with agricultural traditions, lots of open spaces, and a family-centered ethos. … By disallowing multiple single-family homes on one lot, LUDMO expressly prohibits what one may call a "family compound," no matter the size of the lot. Existing family compounds are found throughout the unincorporated county, and usually consist of several dwellings—homes, campers, cabins, etc—in which multiple generations belonging to one family live. … Resources are pooled, workloads are shared, childcare responsibilities are taken care of by loving relatives, and no one goes without as loving families live, work, play and support one another on a common lot. … San Juan County's General Plan—the guiding document for LUDMO—supports the historically proven concept of farming and ranching compounds. Unfortunately, this is but one of many instances wherein LUDMO disagrees with its own guiding document. … LUDMO, as written, prohibits simple solutions to seemingly intractable problems including a lack of affordable homes, inflation, childcare, poverty and isolation."

Marjorie is right and most agree that it seems HOA and very anti-freedom.

Being Reasonable is a spectrum on which all fit somewhere. Some are more than fair, giving more than they receive, are more than reasonable. Some are solidly fair or reasonable. Most tend to side a little with their advantage if they do not know all the details, but will adjust to reasonable once matters are clarified. Then there are those who are simply selfish, quite unreasonable regardless how clear the imbalance is or how clear the details are made known to them. An example is AMR, a brilliant linguist who is right much of the time, but not all the time, and has worked a lot in UA and many language families. One can read the Wikipedia article on him, which was either written by him or by cohorts whom he coached. AMR can be a pleasant enough fellow if you agree with him. I explain an outline of my history with him in the 2020 section. He was first quite unreasonable in his initial criticisms of me. But I took the high road and offered to help him in his research, and we amiably worked together 2 or 3 years; I even wrote a paper for him and presented his paper for him at a UA conference. He also had a large unfinished book-sized manuscript that I was helping him finish. But after a year or so, it became too imbalanced. I had a full-time job, a family to raise, Church jobs, a yard, etc. He had none of those; he could research full time. His wife had left him, he had no kids, did not have a job, was living on disability obtained via a presumed case of chronic fatigue syndrome, after teaching at Michigan a decade or two. The disability bureaucracy was watching him, so he could not publish, except with a "healthy" co-author, so I was working with him to try to help him get some of his thinking out. But I could only find 2 to 4 hours a week to work with him, and I was making no progress on my own research projects, using all my discretionary time (which was not much) to work with him. So after a while, I explained to him that I would need to cut back. I could still help him, but less so. I had too many other irons in fires, my own

research among them. The 30 years since, he periodically blasts me for deserting him, because I wouldn't devote all my spare time to helping him finish and publish his stuff. Some people's unfair perspectives are 55/45, not all that bad, close to reasonable, but a bit in favor of themselves. Others' expectations are 90/10, or 100/0, totally out of whack on the spectrum of reasonability. Such a discrepancy follows:

April 15, Tuesday: Silvia did a superb job as county commissioner against nearly all pressuring her to do wrong. First, a lighter moment. In small talk before the meeting, Jens Nielson, an attorney part-time for the county, asked Silvia what she did for fun last weekend. She was trying to think of an answer, when I piped up from the back: "She doesn't have weekends. She works 12-hour days 7 days a week." Silvia smiled and nodded in agreement toward Jens. San Juan County never had a more conscientious commissioner. Some others also work hard and do good. Silvia is smarter than most know and has lots figured out upstairs, but can't always assemble the 2nd-language English fast enough to compete with fast talkers. The native-English-speakers are quicker in rattling off what may sound more eloquent, though often not as accurate or missing an angle. No one works harder or has a better sense of fairness mixed with compassion. The videos are available online if interested: "San Juan County, Utah, commission work meeting April 15, 2025" and watch Bushnell demand her unreasonable and unfair wants, telling the commission how things should be, and misrepresenting a few facts. Then search "San Juan County, Utah, commission meeting April 15, 2025" the first minutes as Talia Hansen and Tammy Gallegos, two heads of departments, explain how unfair, out-of-line, contrary-to-policy Bushnell's demands are. Bushnell demands to have new employees and to start them at pay much higher than what other department heads earn after years on the job, and Silvia seems alone in challenging the unfairness and their skipping proper procedure through Mack and HR, which would have prevented such stupidity, had they consulted Mack's knowledge. Yet the attorney and one commissioner seem fine with Bushnell and to despise Mack.

May 6: Rough day for poor Silvia. In commission meeting, Bushnell tried another fast one, again not going through the proper process, so Silvia questioned her on it, for trying to do this the 2nd or 3rd time. Silvia kept questioning, trying to get some straight answers instead of the slick skirting of truth that she ever artfully employs, yet Commissioner Maughan and Attorney Nielson sided with Bushnell, thought what Silvia did was unnecessary. Silvia knew Bushnell had not gone through HR, though Bushnell said she did. But Silvia had checked with HR just before the meeting. It was suggested that Silvia could have discussed it with Bushnell and the group beforehand, but that's one of the problems, Bushnell has repeatedly not done the proper procedure to let them know what she's up to beforehand. Not until she stands up and starts talking is it known what trick she's trying to pull this time. (1) In April, Bushnell did not do the proper procedure through HR nor through Mr. McDonald (county administrator) for a new position. Silvia knew she had not, yet Bushnell repeatedly claimed she did. Bushnell wants to hire her friends and not do due process properly. (2) Her excuse of 'being between HR personnel' is not valid. We have two, both Tranner and Krystal, and both active during transition. (3) She said in comm meeting that she prefers to work through Lyman Duncan (she's on the team trying to get Mack out), but Mr Duncan, a very nice man, is not her line of authority and does not know the procedures and regulations like Mack does, and so she prefers working through Mr Duncan because she can get away with things. (4) April 8, 2025, Bushnell announced in PZ meeting that she would be taking PZ issues to Mr Duncan to do whatever (instead of to Mack, the county administrator). That's ridiculous. She seems to be a key player in SUWA's efforts to get rid of Mack, because his knowledge and integrity are an obstacle to the left's environmental manipulating of San Juan County in ways that they'd like. Through the two previous SUWA puppets, they were able to fire or drive out other good employees before Silvia's election, but they had not yet quite accomplished Mack's disappearance, but a handful of players are still at it. (5) San Juan County has some very unhappy employees in light of the string of things that Bushnell gets away with. Some department heads make much less than KB proposed for her assistants, new positions, and that almost went through uncontested, if Silvia had not been "the bad person" to stop it. (6) Twice in commission meetings, I have heard KB claim that she cannot find Mr McDonald and that getting the public notice out properly was beyond her control. Both false and quite funny: I have heard several

county residents and contractors complain of "the joke" (a contractor's term) that Bushnell's department is and the impossibility of getting ahold of her and working with Bushnell's department. Along those lines, she intentionally went on strike for some weeks. To revenge or annoy SJC residents or contractors? And Mack is one of the most dependable of people to get ahold of.

May 16: Today I awoke 4 a.m. from a wonderful dream of how many good friends I have in Blanding, and that listing them would be comforting to reflect on: the Carrolls, all the Pughs and Chamberlains, Wilcoxes, Lovells, Kartchners, Bowrings, all Lymans, Grovers, Preston and MarDawn Palmer's families, Phil and Lawana Palmer families, all Palmers I can think of, Reeds, all Hiatts, all the Jacks, Eugene Shumway's families, Kay Shumway families, most Shumways, Pincocks, all Frost Black families, Gutkes, Nielsons, Dandy's, Singers, Liechty's, Jim and Trudy Shearer, Winders, Kimmerles, Slades, Keylons, Marva Laws' families, Wib Laws' families, all Laws and all Bradfords that come to mind, Longs, Hunts, George Hurst families, Scott Hurst families, Elmer Hurst families, all other Hursts that come to mind, Clea Johnson's families, all Smiths in Blanding, all McPhersons whether still in Blanding or not, the Wilsons, Don and Becky Larson's families, my children's friends, some now grandparents themselves, my families, Ron Eberling, all Redds, Rodney Kyles, Mike and Jackie Moses, Taylor and Jenice Palmer families, Joslins, Tibbitts, all Crofts, Parkers, all Lathams, Ivins, Randalls, LeGrande and Marcia Black, most Blacks though too many to recall all, Calvin and Julie Black, Cranes, Balches, Bayleses, Chip Sharp and Liz Guymon's families, Gary, Larry and many other Guymon families, Bakes, Ben and Robin Benallie family, Tahy's, McDonalds, Tates, Hoslers, many White Mesa people, Wards, and many others who aren't coming to mind at the moment.

May 17: Yesterday Kristen Bushnell filed a grievance against Silvia and Mack. First one ever that Mack can remember in his years here. Ludicrous. Bushnell is the one deserving to have a grievance filed against her. Bushnell is the one not following policy and breaking rules, not Silvia nor Mack.

May 20: An old man's reflection. Most of my adult life, I thought I'd like to do some long-distance hikes, like the Continental Divide Trail (CDT) in the Rockies from NM to Canada, or the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Canada, the Great Western Trail through ID, UT, AZ, or the Colorado Trail. However, by early 70s, I realized that my time for such had passed. In younger days, I was strong and could do a good pace and distance each day to enjoy it, but each summer seemed full of "adult responsibilities" and such a multi-week adventure looked like a selfish single-guy's kind of carefree frolic, plus I taught classes most summers. However, now, reduced strength and endurance have simplified life by removing a number of such ideas from consideration. So now I sit in my easy chair and find a video of such trails on the computer, enjoy the scenery with a little music, do the whole thing in 20 minutes instead of months, and skip all the lightning storms. How's that for lazy?

May 21: Maybe some people do love me. I just found pages that Sarah printed off two and a half years ago, the responses of her Facebook friends to her notification that I was in the hospital Jan 2023. I deem it worth recording some to remind me that some people do like me, as one can wonder at times.
Torri Madden Johnson: Oh no! I love him! He literally saved my life once. (see 2005 June)
Tonya Bleggi: Kelly always talks about your dad up hiking on the mtn roads. Praying he gets better.
Kali Redd Holiday: Sure love this man. Hope he gets better soon.
Brittney Einerson: Love and prayers for all of your family
John and Natani Laws: Such an amazing man and amazing family. You are in our prayers.
Jennie Morris: Tell him to get better, don't want to lose a good friend
Dorothy Mitchell: Sending lots of love and prayers. He's a special man.
Cheyenne Johnson Low: All of you in our prayers. We love your sweet family.
Amy Watkins Kensley: My parents loved yours and I'm pretty sure they're watching over your dad.
Florinda Poyer: Prayers. Your dad is a very kind loving person.
Nicole Perkins: I'm so glad you posted this. Prayers for your dad and mom.
Dantzelle Einerson: Love your family. Praying for you all. Your dad is such a good man.
Karen Crane: Oh dear cousin Brian, praying for you.

Dennis Gutke: Love this man! Get better my friend!
Lynette Olson Stevens: Prayers for sure. Miss seeing him walk and read at the same time.
Katilyn and Dianne Carroll: Dad called him and we talked with him. In our prayers.
Shawna Stokes Setlow: Oh no! Love my cousins.
Vivian Todacheenie: thoughts and prayers with your family. Your dad is an amazing person.
Trudy Shearer: We love your whole family and especially Brian. He has been so good to us.
Deniane Kartchner: Sending hugs and prayers his way!!! We love you!
Ruth Liebel: I love your dad so much, will be praying for him.
Cathy Hurst and Dennis Cosby: love him, such a nice man, hope he recovers quickly
Darcy Brewer Fourman: hearts
Ashlie Winsor: Oh man, I am sorry.
Stephanie Pehrson: heart
Trish Tate: lots of loves and prayers
Letha Burtenshaw: So sorry. Just love your family
Bonnie Brockmeier Purcell: Prayers for him.
Jannalyn Lovell Asbury: hearts
Lana Latham: Prayers for Brian. heart
Karah Nay: hearts
Patti Palmer Porter: We love him, sure a kind man
Piulea Aho Westring: love and prayers for your dad. He's an amazing wonderful person. Love him.

May 23: Today I enjoyed a touching experience. Clark Grover and I were finishing up his contribution to the Merlin and Lou Ann Grover life history. Then he told me about Joseph. Before he finished, he was crying and I was crying. Clark drove bus, taking high school kids and teams to various events. As near as I can remember, he said, "You have gorgeous girls, and I really liked Joseph. I noticed him when he'd get on the bus and get off the bus, and observed him during the trips. Joseph was a good kid, respectful. One time I saw a girl whom Joseph liked, shut him down or say something mean to Joseph. I could see how bad Joseph felt long afterward. It broke my heart. I was struggling with really rough depression myself and when Joseph died, it hit me hard. And your youngest daughter on the drill team, Sarah, was good to me, kind and always nice."

May 24: Don Jack's funeral. A good man, and it was wonderful seeing all their children again, and Tyler Jack and Derek Jack, etc. His son, Shawn, told us the worst swear word he ever heard his dad say. It was in the neighborhood of what Shana once noted is the worst I say: O Crum! Silvia thinks I should not say 'stupid'. I had never heard of that being a bad word, but rather a perfect description of all of us on occasion and some quite regularly. Occasionally during a hail storm, I have commented that 'it's raining like hail outside'. The only time that I really swore was when 9 or 10 in Los Angeles, I got angry at Eric and swore at my dear younger brother. I felt so bad that I never swore again the rest of my life. Eric is as good and kind as this world ever sees. In fact, I can't even remember Eric ever doing anything very wrong. As for his older brother, I may not be perfect, but I do have at least one good quality: I don't use bad language … except 'O Crum' and 'stupid' and 'it's raining like hail outside'.

O, I do remember one time when Eric's judgment was not perfect, nor his older brother's. In LA, we planned to play handball(?) against the garage door. I haven't seen the game played in years, maybe it's too old fashioned. Two players take turns hitting a rubber ball (6-10" diameter) against a wall above a line about 2 feet up the wall, and the other has to hit it against the same wall before it bounces twice, and whoever misses first, the other gets a point. I'll call it wall ball, since I'm not sure what it was called. In LA we had a two-door garage at the end of our drive way; one side had a smallish window 4' off the ground, and we decided to play against the other door with no window. But as I thought about it, I thought out loud, "Maybe we shouldn't play here, in case we accidentally hit it toward the other door and maybe hit the window and break it." Eric said, "We won't hit that; it's far away and we're not that bad of shots!" He had a point; it was small enough and far away enough that chances did seem slim, so we began playing. Well, 15 or 20 minutes into this non-Olympic sport, yep, the ball accidentally broke the window. How did I let my little brother talk me into playing there? I couldn't really blame him, since I was the one who hit the ball that broke the window and agreed to play there. Of all the times that I got in trouble, that might be the closest it ever came to almost being Eric's fault … almost.

June 4: Gold is now near $3400 per oz. When I graduated from high school, it was $35. So it has increased in price nearly 100 times since I was in HS?! I don't remember cashiers holding up one-dollar bills to the light to see if they were counterfeit. Yet a 100-dollar bill would buy as much gold now as a one-dollar bill would buy when I was in HS. Silver is now $35 / oz., so it has increased only 20 times since the $1.80 of 1967. Minimum wage was $1.40 in 1967, now $7.25, so it has increased only a little more than 5 times. The farmer who paid me 75 cents an hour to haul hay must not have known that minimum wage was almost double that, or he knew that I didn't know. Gold up 100 times, silver up 20 times, and minimum wage up 5 times. Wages have never kept up with inflation or the rise in prices. For inflation, we can thank the international bankers who finally succeeded in 1913 to get their hands into the wealth of this rising nation after trying since the 1700s, Jefferson's day. Some traitorous politicians helped their Federal Reserve bill to pass in congress in 1913 and also to pass the income tax the same year 1913, to ensure that we peons at the bottom of the pyramid scam could ever pay the interest payments on an ever-increasing national debt, though there was no regular income tax the first 130 years of the nation and little intermittent national debt (see article in *Morsels for the Mind*).

June 5: My exercise program. Since research is my priority for what little of life might remain, I do 3 exercises. One, I do 100+ squats twice a week, hoping to always be able to stand up from my easy chair. Two, I do arm curls hoping to keep arm strength enough to hold up a book. The weights that I use for the curls—not a dumbbell—that is the guy doing the curls. I use my books: Hebrew Old Testament weighs 3 ½ pounds. I hold it for an hour or for as long as I'm reading it. My Oxford Arabic Dictionary weighs 6 pounds. Looking up a word in it is a workout. Most of my other books are a pound or two. Three, I walk for circulation, hoping to avoid a stroke. I need my brain for research. How's that for nearly inert? I used to hate sitting until age 70. Now I don't seem to mind so much.

June 14: Donald Parry, the BYU Hebrew professor and internationally renowned Dea Sea Scrolls scholar, volunteered to write a fourth endorsement for *Changes*. Very nice of him. He wrote: "Brian Stubbs demonstrates that both external and linguistic evidence increasingly supports the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. From my standpoint, Brian's book, *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*, is essential reading for believers, for skeptics, and for everyone else."

Some year in the 1990s was an adventure not yet listed in this before-I-kick-the-bucket list. The UA conference was in Mexico that year, and Chuck Carroll and a former companion in Panama were driving an old school bus down to Panama to sell it, and welcomed me aboard as a hitchhiker to the UA conference. Near departure time, Hugh Nibley called me to invite me to go with him on one of his trips to the Hopi mesas. What an honor that he would invite me! But I had to tell him that I was headed to Mexico for a UA conference the same weekend. Chuck and his friend drove the bus through NM, TX, and down Mexico's east side. They dropped me off at the nearest point east of Mexico City. I walked a mile or two to find a bus station. During that walk, 6 policemen were standing off the road 100 feet, under a shade. They hollered at me to come over. I walked to the policemen, a few of whom were acting tough, intending to intimidate. They checked my papers, all in order, asked me what I was doing and where going. In my mediocre Spanish, I answered their questions calmly and pleasantly without any effect from their intimidation efforts, "Voy a Teotihuacan, y despues de eso, a una conferencia linguistica de idiomas nativos en la Ciudad de Mexico." When they could see that the intimidation ploy wasn't working, we transitioned into pleasant small talk. Then I continued walking until I reached the bus station that they had directed me to. Teotihuacan was magnificent! While thinking of its place in Mesoamerican history, I marveled at the city of temples, later turned into whatever else after the AD-400 destruction. Then another bus took me to wherever the conference was.

I went to 5 or 6 UA conferences in Mexico over the 35 years when I went to most annual conferences from 1981 to 2017. In Mexico too, it was very nice once among the linguists, but each journey to or from had unpleasantries. One time my passport was pickpocketed and I spent time in the embassy getting temporary papers to be legal again. Mexico has many wonderful people, but enough

crooks mixed in that I later ceased going to the Mexico conferences and only went to those in the states. The Mexican cartels murdering my cousins (see Nov 1919) solidified my aversion to travels south. Even in the states, most conferences are at universities in big cities—big cities also my least favorite places. Yep, I'm a country bumpkin, who loves small towns in the Rockies, and quite dislikes driving big cities.

July 1 commission meeting, Commissioner Harvey asked Kristen Bushnell (KB) what changes have been made to the LUDMO. Twice she said 'many changes' another time said '30 to 40 changes' and 'they're all online on the website put up in January 2025'. No, that is not what Harvey was asking about. The process involving the larger public did not even start until January 2025. The public comment PDF on the county website is dated June 2024, which was six months before it was even brought up to the non-Spanish-Valley or real rural citizens. In 2024, P&Z meetings dealt mostly with Spanish Valley complaints and issues, rarely regular rural San Juan County. Spanish Valley should either incorporate with its unique mix of issues or be made a separate zoning problem and not make ranchers on the range fit in the peg holes they're creating for Spanish Valley. Some P&Z commissioners said similarly at the July 10 meeting. The "changes" that KB mentioned were in response to Spanish Valley issues, not the rural people's concerns who surround Blanding and Monticello and La Sal, who have been sending in desired changes, but none of those changes have appeared yet. Now, on July 8, two days before the July 10 PZ meeting and 8 days after Harvey's question, some minor changes (totalling 3 words, p. 48 and 58, and kennel definition) were put in the subdivision section. And those again appear to be responsive to contractors or Spanish Valley people, but not from the rural folks' complaints.

Also July 1, County Attorney Maughan said the county has gone to great lengths to advise, educate, listen to, and involve the public on issues related to the proposed ordinance. No, far from it. KB did all those public meetings to "educate" the public. She simulated listening, but took none of it to heart and has not incorporated any changes in the LUDMO according to rural public input. I attended all those meetings—Blanding, Bluff, Monticello, La Sal, Spanish Valley. It was a "re-education camp" effort, not a community back-and-forth causing any changes to the LUDMO. I myself sent 15-20 issues against LUDMO to Shanon Brook, to include in his list of issues, and his are more than mine, but none of his nor mine have been put into effect or even brought up.

I looked at general plan pp. 89-97 on land use. Attorney Maughan spoke of hiring specialists / attorneys in SLC for updating the general plan ($10,000), and doing their own interviewing or surveys among citizens. No, that was the problem with the last survey: They asked mostly city people how country folk should be regulated, and most people nor I were aware of any such survey. That is why Shanon Brooks and his team have gone to a lot of work and personal expense to do a survey among landowners in rural SJC. Attorney Maughan in the July 1 meeting spoke of a few "extreme" persons ('extreme' his word) who are the ones always showing up to comment. No, Attorney Maughan again has that one wrong also. Of course, he was referring to Brooks and associates, but Brooks is the voice for hundreds, and not extreme. July 10, Brooks brought up several good points that are problems in the LUDMO and he had a long list of many more which time did not permit. Yet he is ignored, and the voices of all those feeling the same as he does are ignored. His views are consistent with most SJC rural folks much of the time. His overreaction July 10 was not proper but was understandable after years of frustration from constantly being ignored.

In most of the Land Use Ordinance (LUDMO) re-education camps (meetings), one or more persons expressed concerns that when family or friends hit hard times—job loss, house foreclosure, business failure, etc—then coming home to family has been a route of refuge for ages. Why restrict the number of RVs, or long term residency in an RV or a shed or whatever roof? The increases of the homeless on the streets of every big city are mostly due to increasing housing costs and regulations, etc. It is better to live in an RV on family property than homeless on the streets. Those discussions often led to waste / septic issues / outhouses. In such discussions, KB said things like 'we don't want people living in squalor' and 'outhouses are outlawed in Utah and all across the country anyway'. An outhouse is not squalor and costs about 1% of a septic system. I decided to fact-check KB on her statements:

She was wrong again, on both counts: (1) Outhouses are not illegal in UT, and (2) are legal in most states. In 21 states they are illegal, but in 29 states, outhouses are legal; 16 of the 29 require permits of some kind. Sources say that impurities from an outhouse rarely spread more than a few feet. KB is a fast talker and her apparent confidence makes it seem she knows what she's talking about, but much of what she says are her own guesses at reality, not fact at all nor as mandatory as she makes things sound.

In recent commission meetings, KB has lied several times. Silvia knew what she had and had not done. And so Silvia was questioning her and trying to explain the process that KB is supposed to do, and then a grievance is filed against her and Mack. Mack hardly said anything that meeting; why him? They seem to be wanting to build a case to get rid of Mack.

Monday July 7: Yesterday drove up and today drove home from doing a podcast with *The Stick of Joseph* organization. It went well. Cody Wilkins suggested that I contact them, so I did. A pleasant half dozen guys do the organization and they had read my book or were familiar with the research. I was there 4 hours. First, they explained how they do it. I was in the middle of 3 other discussioners (and a 4th ran the tech equipment). They are also a publishing company, good to keep in mind, after Amazon's underhanded maneuvering with my book that had sales go down to zero. That happened twice, though sales were regular for a year or two before each dearth. I looked into it and they basically took the new copies off their website. They arranged it so that a search for my book would bring up only used copies, sold by other people obviously, either for half price or for double price, but no new copies listed. I never ran out of new copies, so I contacted them, asking why they took it off? They straightened it out for a while, then after a year the sales ceased again. I looked again, same thing. Only used copies were available. Twice the Jungle Jippers (aka Amazon) turned to only showing goofy used copies again.

In addition, the finances of Amazon are crooked. They make much more than the author. Now I don't care much about money, happy to give away to folks no better off than I am, having given away hundreds of copies, just wanting to get the word out. But when the multi-billion-dollar business makes 10 times what the semi-impoverished author makes! I posted for Amazon to sell it for 18. But they keep 9 or 11, for doing next to nothing (their electronic systems do the work) and leave me 7-9, then I mail the book, which costs 5 of postage out of the 7! And it costs some dollars per copy to publish the book. So I go in the hole a few dollars for each copy sold on Amazon, while Amazon gets near 10. I have nothing good to say about Amazon, and presently have no interest in doing business with them any more.

I have sent the electronic 3rd edition of *Changes* to about 100 people encouraging them to send to family and friends just to get the word out. The propaganda of the anti's is zipping around the world at the speed of light and swaying many, though none of it holds water. Yet hundreds to thousands of stunning evidences "for" the Book of Mormon are coming to light and need to be known.

July 14: Sarah and Joe were out of town a few days while we took care of the Walker kids. When we do, little Keiton, age 9, usually gets sad by the last day, missing his parents. When that expected time came and he was mourning 'when his mommy would get back', I thought I'd help cheer him by putting it in perspective. I gently mentioned that when Grandma (Silvia) was 9, her mother died, and she never saw her mommy again, and how lucky he was that his mommy was only gone a few days and always came back after 3 or 4 days. Keiton thought about it and stopped crying; Silvia thought about it and started crying. I'm so good at making everyone happy.

Sunday, July 20: The last few days (or weeks or months) I have been weighed down with seeing how many sly wrong-doers in county government continually get away with doing their wrongs, which drives some of the good folks away, who leave the county, because of the contention and seeing the injustices or being the victims of it.

August 6: Pete Black had another right-on letter-to-the-editor today, encouraging the county commissioners not to pass the Land Use Ordinance, as Section 11 Enforcement Actions will put all land use and activities under the control of the Planning Commission, subject to penalties, up to and including confiscation if you should violate any of the provisions in the 129 pages, etc.

August 8: Reflecting on health, I have been blessed nearly all my life to have good health. The year-long ordeal detailed in 2023, age 73-74, was the first serious exception. Only 3 times was I so sick that I could not stand up, would nearly faint if I tried. The first time I got the flu, age 12, I slept 20 of 24 hours and sweat so much that my red pajamas turned a yellow-red. No, not urine, it was perspiration. Age 13, I got the flu again, weak and faint, but again recovered in 2 or 3 days. At U of U (early 30s), both Silvia and I got so sick that neither of us could stand up. We had 3 little ones and crawled to the fridge and sink to get the baby a bottle, and change diapers on all fours, because if I got higher than all fours, I would feel faint. Later bouts of flu never hit hard; in fact, I do not remember having the flu the last half of life, though I never got flu shots. Food poisoning from a fast-food joint on I-15 enroute to Sarah's in Henderson, NV, had me vomiting and feeling awful a couple of days. Other than those, and toothaches, chipped bones, etc, I enjoyed good health to early 70s. Kidneys are the main concern. At age 69, my GFR was 101, better than most 20-year-olds, the dr said, but then Jan 23 it was 14, at dialysis point, but water was drained by catheter and the kidneys improved back up to 75 in 3 or 4 months, and BP stayed good for 2 ½ years until the recent uptick. This week's kidney GFR at 50 Aug 2, at 44 Aug 4, and 48 Aug 7—all in the stage 3 kidney disease range. If I can keep it there or above, I should have some years left. So I'm moderately tentatively healthy, for now, kind of.

August 15: Yesterday drove to Price for Silvia's meetings in the afternoon and for this morning's 7-county meeting, which Silvia always enjoys as so peaceful with good cooperation (vs local meetings). Then we drove to Monticello for Planning & Zoning. No Bushnell present and all commented on how smooth and pleasant the meeting was for first time since 2024. Mack conducted, the P&Z commissioners did the discussing with no overriding corrections from KB. It was smooth and pleasant. We learned later that KB had resigned. Such joy and rejoicing all over San Juan County as word spread, not heard since Silvia's and Harvey's victory over the SUWA puppets. KB resigned like an hour before P&Z meeting was to start, probably thinking that would be a good way to really stick it to the county, an hour before her main performance each month, yet it was the opposite. Most rejoiced and it went so much better.

August 18: blood pressure 150/80 this morning and for a few days now, so I figured the problem is needing a good workout to clean, stretch and loosen the vessels some, which are getting less flexible from not enough exercise. So after bp 150/80, I went for a good fast-ish 3-mile walk for an hour with a few hills. Came back and bp was 135/72. It worked, my thinking seemingly right.

In the evening, did a zoom presentation on 3rd edition to Paul DeBarthe's group across the USA.

I find it interesting that Attorney M and Bushnell were both in place long before Commissioner Bruce Adams retired, yet they waited until he was out before presenting this new 129-page LUDMO (Land Use Ord) to replace the 47-pager, and the very first meeting after Adams was gone, January 7, Attorney Maughan puts it on the agenda to be voted on. Voted on?? I remember the PZ people also asking Bushnell one meeting, "Where did this new ordinance come from?" She did her word salads of ambiguity and eventually said something to suggest that she wrote it. No, she didn't write it. Plus, the PZ board should discuss and decide, not the PZ administrator, but she acts the director, decider, and ruler of the PZ, telling them what they should think and do, and she does most of the talking.

I decided to check what other rural Utah counties have. Many rural Utah counties have no land use document like the proposed 129-page LUDMO and not even like our present 47-pager, which most think worked well. Maybe things have changed since this 2025 search, but this is what I found: **Millard County** has 3 Agricultural zones, but no land use document, only building permit applications / codes, etc. **Garfield County** and **Emery County** and **Iron County** have no apparent land use document, only building permit applications/codes, etc. **Duchesne County** has theirs divided into separate pop-ups that might total 50 pages? **Kane County** has a Code of Ordinances with pop ups totaling perhaps 10-15 pages. **Wayne County** has (1) a short-term rental ordinance of 4 pages and (2) an Economic Development Plan of 12 pages, not about land use restrictions, and (3) has a general plan of 24 pages, with 3 pages (7-9) on land use, which seems to serve as their land use document as well, such that land use sections for Wayne County appear to total less than 10 pages. **Sevier County** seems to have adopted

International Building Code, International Residential Code, and 4 other international codes, and other things for a lengthy ordinance similar to the global government inspiration that Bushnell brought to San Juan County. **Sanpete County** has no large land use document, but a common-sense approach with various departments handling what needs to be handled, with a few pages each. I looked at some other states. Half of **Wyoming's counties** have no zoning in the counties outside of incorporated cities. People are free to do as they wish upon their rural lands. Yes, that's how it is supposed to be!

Sept 4: blood pressure 155/69, heart rate 42. **Sept 5:** 170/75 rate 42.

Sept 5: Jace played a great JV game. Caught a pass surrounded by 3 defenders, slipped past one, then outran the other two 55 yards to the endzone. On defense, he kept up with his man and broke up a pass. Another time intercepted the pass, but his feet were cut out from under him and he got a concussion landing on his back and head, so he couldn't play the rest of the evening.

Sept 6: Enjoyed last day of Book of Mormon Evidence conference. Ryan Nelson, the event planner, suggested that I present again next time, in spite of having presented twice the last 10 years. Then Silvia has her Utah Association of Counties conference Mon, Tuesday and Wednesday in the same building, Davis County Conference Center. Nice coincidence 5 days in same motel next to same conference building of our respective meetings.

Sept 10: Charlie Kirk assassinated at UVU 12:20 as we left Layton's Davis County Conference Center from Silvia's UAC meetings. As we passed UVU an hour later, from the freeway we saw police car lights flashing enroute to help in the manhunt. Tragic day, good man, valuable voice silenced.

Sept 13: My cousin Connie Christensen Young's funeral, with much funny as most Stokes funerals are similar. She was a fun live-wire, like much of her family. I always learn interesting things that have me admiring the person even more. The bishop's closing remarks included: "I visited her Saturday in the hospital. She was comatose and was expected to pass any time. I let her sleep and left. Sunday morning, I got a text from her: 'Bishop, I'm not dead yet. Don't announce it in church.' She died later that day and we announced it the next Sunday."

It was great to see many Stokes cousins again. Harold told an interesting experience during the family meal later. When he was called to be High Priest Group Leader and when choosing counselors, two specific men were always foremost. He told the stake president who reminded him that they were both inactive. Nevertheless, they went to both the men's places, they accepted, did the job, and both were later in bishoprics years later.

Sept 14: Marjorie Haun's letter to the editor in the *Moab Sun News* was a wonderful correction to an earlier biased and inaccurate article. I was at the meeting mentioned; Marjorie's perspective is correct. I include Marjorie's letter here:

"Last week the *Moab Sun* published a letter to the editor written by a resident of San Juan County addressing matters related to Planning and Zoning, in particular, the highly controversial 2025 Land Use and Development Management Ordinance (LUDMO) introduced last year by former Planning & Zoning Administrator Kristen Bushnell. I write this to clarify misinformation and incorrect assertions made in that letter.

The author of the letter impugned SJC law enforcement saying that Bushnell was "physically threatened during a public planning meeting" with law enforcement present "who did nothing." Both points are false.

At the January 9, 2025, P&Z meeting in Monticello, a Blanding man made a highly inappropriate comment threatening any potential code enforcer who entered his private property without permission, but the threat was not directed at Bushnell or any other persons present. At no point was Bushnell under threat. Law enforcement had no cause to treat the situation as threatening to anyone.

The letter asserts that Kristen Bushnell was "bullied" into resigning. That's not the case. Bushnell regularly exhibited unprofessional conduct while in her official capacity, including "going on strike," bypassing proper budgeting processes, and hostile treatment of both citizens and County officials in open meetings. Bushnell had numerous workplace and citizen complaints against her.

In a final show of incompetence or defiance, Bushnell went over the heads of commissioners and County Emergency Services in an attempt to create a "La Sal Fire Rebuild" program in her department. She had no budget and did not have the approval of elected County leaders.

The author asserts that "Non-rule abiders do not want updated ordinances because they may have to get a business license, pay more taxes" etc., and that "WE MUST CHANGE." Both statements are incorrect.

A majority of people living in the unincorporated areas of San Juan County oppose the proposed LUDMO because it is more suited to a densely populated suburban locale than it is an open, sparsely populated, agricultural county covering 8,000 square miles where more than one-third of the population do not pay taxes [Navajo Reservation].

Unfortunately, Bushnell misled many people by promoting the idea that WE MUST CHANGE our planning & zoning regulations with haste, without justifying the urgency. In fact, Utah is reasonably lenient, and counties have a good deal of flexibility in adopting and amending zoning ordinances, giving them wide latitude to tailor regulations to local needs, so long as they align with state statutes.

There was no urgent deadline, and state law encourages counties to execute the process properly with ongoing public input and discussion. The proper process begins with an update of the General Plan which is being undertaken by San Juan County at this time.

Like the author of the letter, I too live within walking distance of the Deer Creek fire burn scar. The author's insinuation that "some of the same people who bullied Kristen into resignation and do not want to be told what they can or cannot do on their land were thrilled when state and federal agency personnel came onto their property and kept it from burning" is unwarranted.

Bushnell was not bullied but resigned of her own volition. Furthermore, I am among many that oppose the 2025 LUDMO who understand the difference between government agencies and citizen volunteers fighting fires and overzealous building officials who show up unannounced on private property.

Perhaps most telling was the efficacy of the Planning & Zoning meeting held on the evening of August 14. Bushnell reportedly resigned earlier that day, so County Administrator McDonald stepped in to serve in her place.

Public comments were heard and regarded with courtesy. Like a breath of fresh air, the meeting proceeded smoothly without disruptions or heated exchanges. The meeting was productive and agenda items were addressed with competence and care, as it should be.

It appears that a measure of equilibrium has been restored to San Juan County.'

Marjorie Haun-Storland, Old La Sal

One could add that Bushnell did the bullying.

Sept 28: a pleasant day at Navajo Mtn. Some good people. Silvia had positive effect. As she talked about us and my wanting to live near the Navajo, I spoke up explaining, "Diné-taa naashá ntéé" (I lived among the Navajo). Many gasped with surprise that I spoke Navajo. But they'd know I don't know much if I had to say much more, having forgotten most of the mediocre that I once knew 55 years ago. Hardest language in the world. Spanish, Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic, Chinese, Ute, Nawatl, German, Sanskrit, etcetera, are all so much easier. Have never found a language as complex as Navajo. Having to deal with 100 languages in research projects, I rotatingly study a few dozen, with briefer sessions on others. So I am a studier of many but master of none. The ones I read best (in order) are Spanish, Hebrew, Aramaic, German, Arabic, Nawatl, Egyptian, Coptic, Ute, with progressively diminishing proficiencies from there through a dozen or two others. I enjoy reading the scriptures in Hebrew OT, Luther's German: NT in Syriac (Aramaic), German, several Nawatl dialects and some in Coptic; The Book of Mormon mostly in Arabic, but also Spanish and German; DC in Arabic, Spanish, and German. But I'm so busy that I have not gotten far in any. I've read perhaps 1/3 of the Hebrew OT, the gospels in

the Syriac/Aramaic NT, and if I combine the Arabic, Spanish, and German parts read of the Book of Mormon, maybe they total half.

Oct 4: Presented to LeGrand Black's institute class in St George Oct 2. Gave the PDF of *Changes* to those interested.

Oct 5: 158/71 rate 46 weigh 216. A wonderful general conference. Many preceding days, I was very down, very sad, the sorrows and burdens and difficulties that my children and grandchildren are suffering through and difficulties in the county and country—it all made me think there is no hope of relief until the next life. I wondered in my mind if anything in the upcoming conference could offer any words to uplift or be helpful in such seemingly hopeless situations, and I had serious doubts of such a possibility. Then the very first talk, Gary Stevenson, how wonderful was all that he brought up. And Jeffrey Holland's talk, the first one on Sunday—another masterpiece. I felt joyful for two days, then the problems again bombard, mainly what folks heap on Silvia.

Oct 6-9: Another marathon trip to Cedar City M-W for Silvia's conference, very beneficial she said, then Wedn from Cedar to Price to 7-county meeting Th, then back to Blanding.

Oct 10: Today I realized one advantage to growing old. When old, it is easier to have an eye single to the glory of God, because one's own is not worth looking at. A lifetime of experience has also taught me that being reasonably humble and wise and steady is most productive. Flashes of brilliance bring little success, but steady work over many years. When I first started studying UA, I was in awe of Wick Miller and Ken Hill for their knowledge and decades of experience in UA comparative research, such that I listened and studied, but said little, figuring my understanding was not comparable. In my 30s and 40s, I enjoyed sitting at the table wherever Wick and Ken sat at UA conferences, to listen to their conversations about UA—the two best minds and depths of UA knowledge discussing UA. I loved it. When I was 50, Wick was yonder, and I realized that I knew about as much as anyone, including Wick in ways, and that in a field involving 30-40 languages, no one knew a very high percentage of all the endless depths that would be good to know. Ken Hill is a better linguist, and he has always been exceptionally kind to me. Besides Ken's compliments on my cognate book mentioned earlier, perhaps late 90s, I had my presentation prepared, which included a certain reconstruction of a cognate set. Ken presented before me and presented a different reconstruction than mine on that same set. I was a tad intimidated, and when my turn came, I went ahead with my presentation, and when it came to that reconstruction, I acknowledged his and the two different reconstructions. Ken immediately said, "I like yours better." What a relief and what a kind thing for Ken to do!

Oct 18: Last 2 days I have started re-reading again *Killing Crazy Horse* (2020) by O'Reilly and Dugard. While it is a well-written overview of a string of sad tales of the removal of many tribes and reciprocal atrocities, kidnappings, torture, and slaughter of innocent women and children both ways, soldiers slaughtering Indigenous camps and the Indigenous slaughtering settlements of settlers. All that on top of all the wars and atrocities happening through history and still now every day: the Ukranian-Russia war, the Hamas slaughter, torture, beheadings, rapes, baking babies, and 2-year captivity of innocent Israelis, successive brutal wars on innocents for decades in Africa and other places, oppressive governments cruelly oppressing citizens to death or subservience in many countries, and criminal cartels with Biden's green light (open borders 4 years) enslaving thousands of women and children into sex slavery. I think of Mormon telling Moroni not to be weighed down to death, after learning of the Nephite atrocities in their ripe-for-destruction state. That is something of how I felt, as if weighed down to such a degree, because equally horrible savagery is ever happening in many places. I felt a sorrow for all mankind more, feeling as if impossible to be comforted until yonder spheres. Then I decided to read at my place in the Book of Mormon, the middle chapters of Helaman, the corruption of judges in the government, upholding the wicked and punishing the righteous, robbers robbing and murdering innocents, yet God still continues His work. In spite of temporary injustices, He eventually does good for the good and karma for the otherwise, whether in this life or the next. I still felt sad for the world, but a degree of comfort that justice will be in time, and felt a depth of humility, gratitude to Him and desire to be kind.

Oct 19: Life is essentially made of 3 states or categories of experience. One consists of fun, beauty, sweet, happy. Third is pain, sorrow, misery, unhappy. Between those is neutral, not happy but not miserable either, going about one's work, the regular doings of life, not in pain but not soaring in joy, not exciting but not sad. The young seek fun, beauty, and sweet. For them neutral is boring, not sought, a place to escape from as soon as possible. But the old, after many more years of pains, sorrows and heavy happenings, we love neutral. Or I do, anyway. A day of no pain and no sorrows is a wonderful day after months of sorrows or pain. As years pass, less and less is fun or exciting—Lagoon rides make us sick, social events are an effort, and travel to exotic places is so much work—a day of peace and quiet and no pain nor sorrow is wonderful neutral, a place we hope will last a day or two, before a new sorrow or grievous news ruins a rare brief peace. Neutral is a state often longed for.

Oct 21: Commission meeting. Mack's knowledge and experience is apparent every commission meeting. As decisions come up, he explains the issues clearly, understands the intricacies and potential problems with certain options. He comprehends better than the attorneys or any of the commissioners. Like Silvia says, he tends to judge matters on the side of compassion. And like 20-year commissioner Bruce Adams said to Silvia, "If they get rid of Mack, the county would go down the toilet." Bruce knows because he did years without a good county administrator and then worked with Mack for years and knows that he's good, just as the Davis County folks know that he is good. They worked with Mack for decades before he came here and they all have the highest praise of him.

In the evening, at the Origins dinner and celebration of CEU/USU, they honored Silvia and two alumni, both in Silvia's day care long ago. I gave away 10 books, much appreciated. Patsy Shumway passed away. Gary Guyman life-flighted to SLC with huge tumor around kidneys and abdomen.

Oct 22: BP 145/72 rate 44. Visited with Nephrologist Pandya. GFR 54. Up some from August.

Oct 23: Silvia and I amazingly had an empty 3-hour window in the afternoon today—a rare rest from her near constant involvement in meetings, phone calls, emails, preparatory readings, travel to and from meetings, helping in planning and orchestrating projects, etc, etc. Daily climbing out from under unjust criticisms and biases regularly heaped upon her from age 10 to now, she talked through some of many totally skewed judgments against her and instances of unfair treatment at her. Though married to her 54 years, I learned new ones that I had not heard before, from her childhood to mid-70s. I'm not sure that I have ever known someone who has done so well through so much ill-treatment and misjudging, who continues resurfacing from under so much. I felt like crying for her after listening awhile.

And that's just the USA stuff. In Argentina, her stepfather had a bad temper, making life a constant stress and misery. Once he put puppies in a bag and repeatedly smashed them against a wall until dead. Another time someone spilled water on the table, and the water went between the glass cover and the wood table. He intentionally broke the glass cover and carved up the surface of the wood to ruin the table. Another time he threw his daughter Marta through a glass door, which cut her badly. Silvia held Marta, holding a towel on the wounds to stop the bleeding. After one such explosive rant, Silvia talked to her mother, suggesting that they can leave him and move back to Tucuman far away. Silvia and Alejandra could work, and the family could enjoy a calm and pleasant life. When the stepdad found out what Silvia had suggested, Silvia was a target, and life became even more unbearable for her. Ages 14 to 16, Silvia lived with Ester and the sisters—Alejandra, Mari, Marta, Amelia—trying to save the family. But when it became apparent that Ester would not leave his lunacy and that Silvia could not help the family, she learned of the Church, knew it was true, and was baptized, after which and because of which, life's level of unbearable went up even more. He broke her guitar to pieces, and Silvia knew she had to leave, and with God's help she escaped.

Oct 25: Patsy Shumway's funeral—another great lady, just quietly going about doing good all her life. It was good to see Kay, Jody, Stuart, Katrina, Bev, Amber, and Robyn again.

Oct 26: Today we spoke at White Mesa again. As I watched the people coming in before meeting, I got choked up with compassion for the good souls who come and were working through life's difficulties. The meeting started 10 minutes late (10:40), so for an hour meeting I thought it ok to go to

11:40, but the stake presidency counselor there saw it differently and told me to wrap it up. First time in 76 years that I was told to stop talking. I bear my testimony only once every 15 or 20 years, just to avoid talking too much. But I did not take offense, or not enough to go inactive, though I certainly don't feel like speaking again. Have done it enough to last for life, is the present sentiment.

Oct 30: Funeral of my cousin, Terri Stokes Brinkerhoff, a lovely and wonderful person. I had no idea that she played violin well, had other talents, and was instrumental in the baptism of 17 friends by her senior year in high school. It was wonderful to see many relatives again whom I don't see often: Harold, his children Heather Gourley and Pierce Stokes, and his brother, Don Stokes, his wife, his son now in the Midway bishopric where Mom and Dad lived. Terri's children on the program: Heidi spoke, Shane played a nice song that he and Terri wrote.

Nov 2: 154/71 rate 46. Clark Hawkins, teacher in Sunday School, quoted his dad as often saying: "Life is hard and then you die

Nov 7: Once a month or so, I send a family email to Silvia, siblings, children, and grandchildren. This was the bulk of yesterday's: Hi family, So I expanded my culinary skills a bit. Instead of making wheat thicks, I made malto-meal thicks 2 days ago. Occasionally, I make whole wheat mush, with honey and a little salt mixed in, spread it on a cookie sheet, bake it in the oven, then cut it in squares and they're kinda like wheat cookies. Kinda, loosely. With a little imagination. Instead of wheat thins (they're not thin), so I call them wheat thicks. I have to hide them from Silvia and the kids. Just kidding, they can have all they want, which is usually one ... once a year. But Jace and I like them and a few other people think they're ok. A great healthy snack, not as good as oatmeal raisin cookies, but healthier than most breads. Well, I quite like malto-meal too, and it's healthy—only wheat and barley. So I cooked up a big pot of malto-meal, again with honey and salt mixed in, poured it on an oiled cookie sheet and baked. I took some to Jace and a few other people had one; others decided they'll skip this season and have one of next year's, 2026. As we were leaving town, there were not many left, so I put the rest of them in a plastic bag and put the bag in my sweatshirt pocket to snack on and finish off during the trip to Cedar City to watch SJHS semi-final FB game. We stopped at the Maverick in Salina, and I bought Silvia and me water. While I was buying the water, the cashier, a big burly guy, noticed the corner of a plastic bag sticking out of my pocket, and asked, "What's in your pocket?" I've never been accused of shop-lifting before, so I decided to have some fun with it. I pulled it out, held it high enough for all the people in line behind me to see also, and I studied at it, as if trying to remember what it was (all crumbs by now), and I said, "You wouldn't like these. I made them two days ago. The only place in the world where these are made is in my kitchen. They're not very popular." The line of people behind me enjoyed some chuckles, and the cashier guy was sorry he ever brought it up.

On the way out of the store, we saw a motorcycle, which reminded me of my favorite motorcycle joke, which half of you have heard, I'm sure. But for the other half:

A trucker, with a big semi-truck, stopped at a cafe to get breakfast. Ordered pancakes, eggs, and a drink. Before he could hardly start, three motorcyclists of some motorcycle gang, pulled up to the cafe, walked in, sat on both sides of the trucker, and one took his pancakes, the 2nd took his eggs, and the 3rd helped himself to the trucker's drink. The trucker, looked at them, didn't say anything, just walked out. The 3 cyclists then said to the waiter behind the counter, "Not much of man, is he?"

The waiter said, "Not much of a driver either. He just ran over 3 motorcycles."

love you all, bro bri, father fond of malto-meal, grumpy gramps when the malto-meal thicks run out, happy hubby when I make some more

In this linguist's life history, I may as well answer a question that I have been asked all my life: "How many languages do you speak?" Answer: English. I have briefly studied some 200 languages, and deal with 50 to 100 in my research (depending on language families being researched), and have been able to read a dozen or two at the peak of each when studying it regularly. When young, I was a fast learner; but now, I'm nearly as fast a forgetter. When young, I could study and ever expand the

knowledge in my brain, but by 50s, I started wondering if I was increasing or recycling. It seemed that when I tried putting more in, an equal amount fell out the other side. Learning seemed less an accumulation and more a rotation. I knew best whatever I had studied most recently, but I was never conversationally fluent in any language except English, mainly because I never focused on conversation, though I could do okay in Spanish and somewhat in modern Hebrew long ago. Research is an individual endeavor, so I was ever reading, studying, and dealing with languages from books. But talking with people? Not sure I was ever into that. So I am master of none, moderately literate in a dozen-plus, have a mediocre familiarity of 50, and have mostly forgotten many others. I came home from my mission and began studying Spanish, and after 2 months, I knew Spanish better than Navajo after 2 years—the hardest language in the world. Two of my 5 areas were more English-speaking, so only a year-plus was spent in Navajo-speaking areas. A flimsy excuse, but it'll do, when one must learn 40 words to conjugate one verb in Navajo, and walk more miles than minutes spent in conversation many days. Most learned it no better, though Worthy Glover and Garth Wilson did well. After figuring out that Athapaskan crossed the Bering Strait, I focused on Lehite language lines, though the Navajo are substantially Lehite by blood. After learning 2 or 3 languages, one can systematize how language works in a more big-picture way and learn the 3rd, 4th, and 5th more quickly, or grasp its workings and patterns more readily, though finishing to fluency is a long haul in any language.

In the 1970s or 80s, an Israeli couple had stopped at a service station in Blanding. As I walked by, I heard them conversing in Hebrew. I stopped and joined the conversation. They were very surprised to find a rural bumpkin in the boonies of Utah who knew Hebrew. I could not converse now, 40 years later, having forgotten much and being hindered by a slower brain. Years later, Ruth Ellen Pollan, our art professor, a nice Jewish lady from New York, got cancer, and she or someone asked that I give her a blessing, which I did, also in Hebrew. She too was surprised and appreciative. The brian brain used to work better. In my 30s, 30 new students could walk in the first day of class, and I'd have each tell his/her name, then I'd go back through the class and say all their names. But by mid-40s, I quit doing that, as the percentages ceased being remarkable. Now I forget old friends' names.

Nov 17-21: Another long, hard week. Tooth was pulled Monday, which had been bothering me some months, plus meetings, then commission meeting Tuesday, meetings Wednesday morning, then drive to SLC Wednesday afternoon for meetings Th and Friday.

Friday, Dec 5: worst day ever, Silvia said, after 3 hours of meetings, can't talk about it.

Saturday, Dec 6: Mike Christensen said that he has really enjoyed my book, *Changes in Languages*, and has read it twice now. It is good to hear now and then of people enjoying the work.

Tuesday, Dec 9: Drove to Springville Sunday, spent Monday in making podcasts at the *Ancient America Foundation* building with Kirk Magleby, Neal and Jasmin Rappleye, and Egyptologist Stephen Smoot and Jared Riddick of FAIR, and Zander Sturgill. The three interviews went well, I thought. We may know better when the podcasts are put online, as if I won't cringe a time or two at spots when seeing myself. Then drove home today, Tuesday.

As I drove home, I thought about my good friends among Uto-Aztecan scholars: Ken so kind, Jane Hill had a delightful sense of humor that tickled my funny bone regularly, Pam Munro and Karen Dakin ever helpful, Larry Hagberg and Eugene Casad were most kind and are now yonder, and Lyle Campbell, Joe Campbell, Ray Freeze, Dirk Elzinga, John McLaughlin, Tom Willett, Jason Haugen, Luis Barragan, Heidi Harley, Eric Elliott, Rosa Rosalez, Zarina Estrada, Jose Luis Moctezuma, and others have always been kind. My U of U professors, Wick Miller and David Iannuci and Mauricio Mixco, were also good to me. Years later I reconnected with one and he asked me about Phil Lyman. He had decided that Phil Lyman was a bad person simply by reading the warped SL Tribune articles about Phil, which paper lies a lot, against Silvia once too, usually intentional political slants to make conservatives look bad. I explained how Phil is a good guy and how the powers-that-be had no interest in justice or common sense, yet I could not convince him that Phil is good. The professor's admiration for CNN's Rachel Maddow's "astute" analyses against common sense was similarly surprising. A warper of reality she is.

Wedn Dec 10: Today we attended Gary Guyman's funeral. His kidney cancer was discovered only 6 weeks ago. A good man, and at every funeral I learn new things that raise my admiration even higher. Shannon Guymon Hickman and a brother told me they were near Shana's age, and two others near Sheila's age. One speaker mentioned that Gary loved San Juan County and thought it and its people made it the best place on earth. That's exactly how I felt my first 50 years in Blanding. Only since Silvia's 3rd year as county commissioner have I struggled to keep that feeling. Blanding is still 95% good people, though I'm growing less sure of Monticello's percentage. Some folks don't have all the facts (not all of which are allowed out) and don't know what they're talking about, swallow the hearsay, and rant in partial ignorance. That is more forgivable, as they would likely think differently if they only knew. But the few of cruel ploys, trying to drive a good person out and falsely smear with planted rumors to ruin his life—that weighs on me. How can members be so mean upon the innocent who has done none of what they accuse him of? While I'm target of some unjust and false accusations, I have it easy compared to some. At least I am free to divulge details to refute the false accusations against me, which I now do, for the record, on the linguistic battles, highlighting from and adding a few thoughts to the main article of—

Answering the Critics in 44 Rebuttal Points

The full article (with its 127 footnotes) is online at Dan Peterson's *Interpreter* website; here are a few highlights from it with a few more clarifications here and there.

Of the 44 Rebuttal Points, 24 of them answer Chris Rogers' extremely upside-down and careless review, 15 answer Magnus Pharao Hansen's 14 Nawa items, and 5 answer other questions often raised. Rogers, in his attempt to play sophisticated condescending intellect, is insulting at times, but also comes across as quite entertaining when one understands what he is saying in contrast to what my books actually say, as he attempted to review *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan* (2015, 2nd ed 2023) and *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now* (2016, 2020, 3rd ed 2025). While skepticism has often been and should be the initial reaction, among the 50-plus Uto-Aztecan specialists and other linguists and Semitists who have received it from me, 20 offered favorable assessments, 30-plus were silent, 2 voiced contempt, but none refuted it with specifics, until four years later (2019) when two linguists tried to disprove it, but missed. These highlights from a few of my answers to the attempted refutations have the same number as the 44 in the article.

1. The first incorrect assumption of Chris Rogers is evident in his review's title and in several pages throughout. He claims that I propose a long-distance genetic linguistic relationship between Afro-Asiatic and Uto-Aztecan (UA), which would involve a time-depth of some 10,000 years. Rather, UA contains several hundreds of cognate parallels with sound correspondences from a hybrid Northwest Semitic language, with early forms specific to Hebrew and Aramaic, along with Late Egyptian (1600-600 BC) of the same era (not Middle Egyptian, not Old Egyptian, nor Proto-Afro-Asiatic). The data point to a much shorter time-depth of perhaps 2,500–3,000 years.

2. Rogers frequently misrepresents my work. An example is his claim that the Nahuan or Aztecan languages "are systematically ignored in the comparisons." How systematic could the ignorance be when a search in *Exploring the Explanatory Power* reveals over 1,400 occurrences of Azt, the abbreviation for Aztecan, meaning the Nahuan or Aztecan branch of languages, and 894 occurrences of CN, the abbreviation for Classical Nahuatl. It is abundantly represented. His claim is totally false!

3. Rogers, by misquoting others, says the opposite of what the authors originally stated. For example, John Robertson, in reviewing *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, stated, "I cannot find an easy way to challenge the breadth and depth of the data." Yet Rogers misrepresented that quote to say, "There is ample reason to 'challenge the breadth and depth of the data,'" citing Dr Robertson's article as if Dr Robertson actually said that.

4. It is ironic that Rogers accuses me of "numerous assumptions" when he is the creator of mistaken assumptions, such as asserting that the "only motivation for comparing Semitic languages and

Egyptian to the Uto-Aztecan languages seems to be Stubbs' personal investment in Uto-Aztecan languages and linguistics." Nothing could be further from the truth. I looked into most of the 190-plus American language families and found substantial Northwest Semitic and Late Egyptian in UA. So Rogers's assumption has the reality backwards: It was years of investigating dozens of language families of the Americas that put me onto UA and motivated my 40-year investment in UA, not the other way.

Number 5 and all others not specifically listed are likewise mistaken notions clarified, but are either too technical (boring) or not as ludicrous or wild as these more amusing highlights.

6. Rogers is right in his saying that "long-distance relationships are less likely to include a large number of similarities." But he is again wrong in calling the UA tie a long-distance relationship. It is long-distance geographically, but linguistically, long-distance means a deep time depth, not 2500-3000 years. He says, "The sheer number of similarities in Stubbs' proposal is not likely for the type of linguistic scenario presented." That is wrong because my proposal is not of a deep time-depth. So, I have too many similarities? Did he ever think that maybe it is a different kind of relationship, like a kind with many similarities? No, that never seemed to occur to him, in spite of my specifying the languages compared to UA in both books, and other things point to that.

7. Another mistaken notion clarified, to which I add: "The problem with Rogers's citation of Campbell and Poser is that none of those characteristics apply to my work, though Rogers presumes the opposite in all three. My lexical similarities (1) are based on a system of sound correspondences, (2) are numerous, and (3) do not involve a temporally long-distance (deep time-depth) relationship. They do, however, show one language family with considerable language contributions from specific languages at a fairly shallow time-depth."

9. Rogers claims to see "mistaken definitions or incorrect characterizations of linguistic concepts" in my work. That is odd because the best Uto-Aztecanists in the world, PhDs in linguistics, have all received my work by now. These men and women have known me for decades, and none of them has ever spoken of incorrect characterizations of linguistic concepts. Throughout my 40 years of presenting at professional linguistic conferences and publishing in several journals, this is the first time I have been accused of mischaracterizing linguistic concepts. When MIT decided to publish a volume on UA, the other Uto-Aztecanists voted me to write the first article to introduce the language family with a comparative overview. When the *Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas* decided to do a special session on UA to celebrate the centennial since Sapir's establishment of UA in 1915, the other Uto-Aztecan specialists selected me to present the lead paper to begin that session. Two different editors of the *International Journal of American Linguistics* (the most prestigious journal for publishing comparative Native American work, in which I have published four articles) both said (20 years apart, David Rood, 1994, and Willem de Reuse, 2017) that I do good work. I was invited to give a lecture at UCLA on comparative Uto-Aztecan, and Calvert Watkins, Harvard's internationally renowned Indo-European linguist scholar, happened to attend, and afterwards he told Dr. Munro (the prominent UCLA linguist who invited me, accomplished in Uto-Aztecan, Yuman, Muskogean, and Zapotecan) that "we need more lectures like that one." That is an unusual list of compliments and honors heaped on one supposedly mischaracterizing linguistic concepts.

I do agree with Rogers' description of the large reference book *Exploring*: "Each page is dense with information and is formatted with small margins and few visual breaks for the reader." Rogers is right, as most encyclopedic reference works are dense with information, have small print and margins, so take a break if needed. Rogers continues, "This makes the book seem unfinished." Rogers is right again. The book seems unfinished because it ***IS*** unfinished. It is only a good start! Two or three more lifetimes are needed to do only what I see needs doing in UA, but I shall not live so long, and so I thought it good to let others possess the 30-year plateau of the matter, upon which other linguists might build. All my works are works in progress. Only when I die do all drafts become final drafts. How many lives have been devoted to Indo-European or to UA? Hundreds.

12. Rogers' condescending attitude and derogatory language are apparent throughout. For example, he writes, "it is so replete with disorganization, numerous assumptions, mistaken definitions or incorrect characterizations of linguistic concepts, inexact methods, pedantry, and apologetic rhetoric that the idea [of the language tie] seems dubious, even without careful scrutiny." This dismissive attitude is ironic given that what he missed confirms that his approach was "without careful scrutiny." In contrast, the best UA specialists in the world and Semitic scholars said no such thing but responded either with favorable comment or no comment.

He seems bothered by apologetic rhetoric (language defending the Book of Mormon). My words simply spell out the data and evidence. Is it the thought of evidence for the historicity of the Book of Mormon that he dislikes? Or that anyone would be so audacious as to defend a historicity that he deems doubtful? I'm not sure what apologetic rhetoric even sounds like?

14. Rogers says: "A proposal for a genetic relationship between two or more languages must be supported by two types of evidence: (1) evidence that the languages discussed are in fact genetically related, and (2) evidence for the reconstruction of the common linguistic ancestor. Unfortunately, the proposal is problematic on both counts." No, it is not. My work is not problematic on either count. First, it includes ten times the amount of evidence as many language families are founded on and it meets all the requirements: more than enough matches (1657), and with sound correspondences, numerous grammatical parallels, unusual semantic combinations preserved, and more. Second, for each item, the Semitic or Egyptian form listed in bold is the form that the UA forms descend from.

15. Rogers says, "One of the main methodological issues of Stubbs's proposal is the omission of an explanation for why the UA and Afro-Asiatic languages are being compared in the first place." Again, I am not looking at Afro-Asiatic as related to anything, but instead we are dealing with a transplant into the Americas from specifically Hebrew and Aramaic and Late Egyptian, which were all specific languages long after Afro-Asiatic. And simply finding similarities is how Indo-European was discovered. I investigated dozens of language families and found UA to have many similarities with those 3 Old-World languages. I started with only Hebrew on the other end, but found as much Aramaic and Egyptian, without expecting to and without looking for it, but I happened to know Aramaic and Egyptian, and noticed them as well, just as Sir William Jones happened to know the languages that he looked at without planning on finding the similarities.

In the next paragraph Rogers repeats his ever-circular concern, "Stubbs's proposal … suggests that the putative similarities are the evidence that these are related languages, but then fails to explain why specific languages are named and used in the comparison." How many of these Rogers statements make sense? Similarities consistent with the comparative method **ARE** evidence!!! It should go without saying that the languages themselves are the best source for determining whether languages are related or not. Sir William Jones noticed the similarities among key Indo-European languages (Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Germanic, Celtic) simply because he was familiar with the languages, not because something else or someone else told him why "those are the languages you need to look at."

Rogers continues: "Other than the Book of Mormon, which provides very little information about the languages used by its writers, there is no linguistic or extra-linguistic motivation that these languages should be related." Little information? How about the mention of Hebrew and Egyptian at both beginning and end, as "the languages used by its writers." He seems repeatedly stuck on why I chose UA? As mentioned, I looked at dozens of language families and found UA to be loaded with many similarities and worth pursuing, so is not that a linguistic motivation?

18. Rogers arranges my data to suggest things I never said. In addition to items addressed above, he also misrepresents how I presented the plural suffix. He portrays it as Semitic *-iima > Hebrew -iim > UA *-ima, and then says that an explanation is needed for why the final -a disappeared in Hebrew but was reinserted in UA. Both books he reviewed explain that the Hebrew Bible was voweled by the Masoretes ca. 700 CE, nearly a millennium and a half after Lehi. So UA did not reinsert -a, but the two independent changes, Northwest Semitic *-iima > UA *-ima and independently *-iima > Hebrew -iim, both derive

from the older Northwest Semitic *-iima, not in the sequence that he "assumes." In fact, items like this point only to Canaanite/Hebrew *-iima, because Arabic –uuna/-iina, Akkadian -uu/-ii, Aramaic -iin, etc., exclude other Semitic languages, removing the language tie far from Proto-Afro-Asiatic. The esteemed Uto-Aztecanist Wick Miller agreed with my reconstruction of PUA *-ima. Most scholars before me had reconstructed UA *-mï, but they all neglected to consider that five UA languages have a high-front vowel (i or e) preceding -m-, as well as other pertinent matters. Though Miller refused to consider my proposed Near East tie, he could not refute it and agreed with many points, dozens of new cognate sets and reconstructions that I brought to him, as long as I did not mention the Hebrew similarity.

20. Rogers asserts, "while the Uto-Aztecan language family is one of the most studied language families in the Americas, as is the Mesoamerican cultural area, the fact that very little is done to connect the proposal back to this previous scholarship is thus odd." How does Rogers arrive at this ludicrous complaint? The latest and largest book on comparative UA (my 2011 work favorably reviewed) includes and builds on all the viable previous UA linguistic scholarship; otherwise, it would not be so highly praised by UAnists. If he has in mind cultural, archaeological, and other such factors, the other major linguistic works on UA did not include those either. And if he thinks UA is a Mesoamerican language family, he needs to realize that Nahuatl (in Mesoamerica) is one of 30 UA languages and the other 29 are not situated in Mesoamerica. Wick Miller wrote *Uto-Aztecan Cognate Sets* with 514 sets. Miller later collected others, and Kenneth Hill added another 400 sets to total perhaps 1300 sets on a UA computer file. The next publication was my 2011 work, which features 2,700 cognate sets, and UAnists love it.

23. Rogers states that I "purport to provide some insight into the "unknowns of Uto-Aztecan" grammar." Having studied and researched in UA some 40 years, I am well acquainted with the unknowns in UA and the puzzles perplexing UA specialists, and indeed, pp 376-391 in *Exploring*, are 15 pages of "dense" compact data and explanation that indeed explain 6 unknowns and phonological puzzles that the Semitic and Egyptian data clarify, which had previously bewildered UA specialists during the century since Sapir 1915 until Stubbs 2015. Did Rogers even read those pages? He apparently did not, because if he did, he should have been somewhat impressed, that is, if he read with an open mind and understood.

24. I was surprised by Rogers's use of Edward Sapir's article that ties Subtiaba to the Hokan hypothesis to exemplify that "long-distance relationships are convincingly determined through submerged features." Campbell cites Rensch, Suarez, and Kaufman as superseding Sapir and says that "it is now clear that Tlapanec-Subtiaba is just one more branch of Otomanguean" and thus is not tied to Hokan, as Campbell, Rensch, Suarez, and Kaufman establish that it is Otomanguean, not Hokan. So not only is Rogers's and Sapir's Hokan-Subtiaba tie discounted by Campbell and others, but Hokan itself is a hypothesis "still undemonstrated and controversial," says Campbell. Furthermore, Hokan's hypothetical status is common knowledge among linguists researching in Native American languages. Rogers's attempt to sound astute backfired.

Some of Rogers' statements seem to suggest that he does not believe in the historicity of the Book of Mormon. He claims, "with our current understanding of the historicity of the Book of Mormon and languages in both the Americas and the Middle East, it is both irresponsible and implausible to suggest a definitive discovery of what language(s) the various groups mentioned used or knew." Irresponsible to make a discovery? It is irresponsible to misrepresent data and ignore most of it when more than enough data establish that such a discovery has been made. By "our current understanding of the historicity of the Book of Mormon" he seems to suggest either "we don't know about its historicity" or "we wise ones have collectively concluded against its historicity but ye little of understanding have yet to catch up."

Rogers also labels me as one "preying on individuals anxious for such a connection." That's weird. I don't prey on anyone, but only search for the truth. I have never been one to satisfy anxieties with false information. If the connection is valid, as most linguists conclude who actually look carefully at the data, then it is a huge advance from the impasse that has impeded "our current understanding of" many Book of Mormon language matters.

Related to his nebulous perspectives on the historicity of the Book of Mormon, Rogers states, "In my personal reading of the Book of Mormon, Afro-Asiatic languages were not culturally predominant as the history unfolds. They seem instead to be restricted to a small class of priest scribes."

How can he say that? Nephi mentions Hebrew and Egyptian in the 2nd verse, and 1,000 years later Moroni speaks of how they, the Nephite people, had altered both Hebrew and Egyptian during their millennium of history. The same two languages are mentioned at the beginning and at the end of the 1,000 years, as languages that they used.

Rogers continues, "We simply do not have any recorded information about the language(s) being used by the people in the Book of Mormon (other than a small amount of information about the class of priest-scribes)." Yes, we do. It states both at the beginning and end that they used Hebrew and Egyptian, and that they had altered both during the interim 1,000 years. Only living / spoken languages change, and only dead or liturgical languages do not change (like those used by priest-scribes). And the people speaking it are the instruments of change. So, even though we don't know everything, we have some good fundamental "information about the language(s) being used by the people" in one vicinity, at least.

Rogers continues his erroneous attempts at intellectual slight-of-hand, "Without that information, any suggestions of linguistic affinities are wildly speculative and should be dismissed." Wildly speculative? While it is possible that the Book of Mormon language(s) died out, it is also possible that they continued in some place(s) in some descendant form(s), so there is nothing wrong with looking to see which is the case. I think his irregularities of reason are wildly speculative. Furthermore, many of his statements suggest that he thinks even looking should be automatically branded as speculative, because of his apparent confidence against any possibility of historicity.

Magnus Pharao Hansen's objections to 14 Nawa items are addressed in numbers 25 to 39. I agreed on one item that did need to be tossed out and saw sufficient doubt on another that I eliminated both. I explained why the evidence seems to favor the other 12. Magnus was more civil most of the time. So, of 1528 sets, Magnus found 2 errors and Rogers 0, leaving 1526, to which we added 130 more for 1657 sets in the 2nd edition (2023). I also find it curious why Magnus picked only 14 of the 315 sets in which Aztecan cognates are listed.

40. Online critics often ask why my 365,000-word work was not peer reviewed. A single peer review may be reasonable and fair, or it may be biased and unfair, the latter being more probable for a controversial and potentially career-damaging topic of a large book that few feel inclined to digest very thoroughly. The fact of the matter is that it has been officially peer reviewed 3 times, by Dr John Robertson, a Harvard PhD in historical linguistics and prominent Mayanist; by Dr Dirk Elzinga, a specialist in the Numic UA languages; and by Dr Chris Rogers, a specialist in the Xincan language family of Mesoamerica, the first two positive, the third negative. Because attitude and bias are often as apparent in peer reviews as sound analysis, I say let the world of linguists look it over and think about it awhile, and be the ultimate collective review committee. Time will tell the truth. It is available online for free and many scholars world-wide have downloaded it. Give them some time.

Kenneth Hill (2012), a top Uto-Aztecanist and prominent linguist, in his review of my large UA reference work (2011), said, "Each set is discussed in some detail and the serious comparativist will delight in the discussions." He also added, "All in all, this is a monumental contribution, raising comparative UA to a new level." John Robertson (2017), echoing Hill's language, says of the next large reference work, "Stubbs's 2015 publication also raises "comparative UA studies to a new level" and "In fact, the Semitic [and] Egyptian forms proposed to underlie the UA forms often answer questions and explain puzzles in UA that Uto-Aztecanists [had] not yet been able to explain."

After reading my review of Rogers, Wilfred Griggs (a retired BYU Egyptologist) emailed to some, saying something near, "Remind me not to attack Stubbs' work." All other BYU linguists, Semitists, and other scholars, who have looked at my work have spoken well of it, except Rogers, and obviously he had not looked at it very closely. I heard from a number of his colleagues in the BYU linguistics department that they were perturbed by his attack and flawed perspectives. Some of Rogers'

statements above are from a pre-publication draft, not in what finally appeared. The editor must have discouraged him from raising the anti-historicity angle so clearly.

The online barrage of contemptuous chatter without specifics from know-nothings continues, but no other linguists besides those two, have put out in-print efforts against me these last 11 years, since the publication of *Exploring* in 2015 through our present approach to 2026.

December 21, Sunday: Little 8-year-old Brooklyn Crofts, daughter of our neighbors, Skyler and Ruth Crofts, has passed, perhaps the same date as our Joseph, December 20th, 36 years ago. She collapsed at home last week, was life-flighted to Primary Children's Hospital in Lehi, but no brain waves, so the life-support was pointless after a point, but they had the machines keep her alive until Dec 25, when she gave 4 organs that saved 4 other lives. Then she died.

As Sarah and her family talked and mourned during tearful reflections, 14-year-old Cienna (8th grade) said, "At least she doesn't have to go through middle school."

Today I continued typing some of Silvia's life history and got choked up at her exceeding sacrifices and continuous good works in spite of and during the sacrifices.

In 6th ward, I played cello, accompanying a song sung by Madeline Pugh and piano by Lydia Pugh Pemberton, the song Noel by Daigle. It had a cello part and Denise Smith Johnson asked me to play the cello part, which I improved or rewrote to be prettier and simpler. The Pugh girls are a good singer and a good pianist. It went well. Wish we had a recording of it.



For Christmas, I gave Silvia a bouquet of 100-dollar bills. Ten of them (yes, $1,000). A small softener of all of life's hard things she has to bear with, myself being only one, and perhaps the easiest one now that she's county commissioner. Some of those mean folks make me seem quite kind. The $1,000 used to be a sizable sum, for those reading in the future when inflation will have dwindled it again. In the State Capitol is a picture of an old-time restaurant with its menu of meals costing 15 to 35 cents, now costing $15 to $35.

December 27: Apostle Jeffrey R. Holland passed today of kidney disease. BYU won the pop tart bowl yesterday, as close as can be. Next to last play a near TD pass passed through their receiver's hands in the endzone. The last play, a BYU defender intercepted their pass in the endzone, time over, we won 25-21. From the start, I knew.

December 28, Sunday: Wonderful day! Bridger and Jade Meyer spoke in our ward. Macee Palmer and High Councilman Adam Black spoke in 8th ward, Bishop is Steve Francom, Genevieve led music, Palmers and Grovers and many good friends I hadn't seen for a while. Then Preston and Mar Dawn put on a meal, filling the BAEC, where we got to eat with Malin, Madison, Kia, Siah, and kids, and we congratulated Jensen Grover and his Oak-City bride whose reception we missed last night. What great families are the many Grovers and Palmers and many others there, including our recently released Stake President Alon Pugh, who told Malin about how much I used to eat, saying that he and his teenage friends envied how much I could put away. I don't remember the incident(s) when he may have observed whatever to give him that idea, but it sounds like the former me, so I can't deny. If he and his friends were teens, I was 40-ish.

2026 January 1: Speaking of eating, I have moderated, with efforts toward "dainty eater" (that direction, never "arriving") and cut down on sugar the last 3 years, but the past week or two of this holiday season, I enjoyed partaking of goodies only a time or two per day. I could feel the strep throat coming on. I had many strep throats in my 20s and 30s, and always did the doctor and antibiotic route. I always get colds and strep throats from too much tasty stuff, never caught it from cold weather or from

persons. I came to recognize the "it hurts to swallow" point of the start of strep, so one time (40s?), I could feel the painful swallow state arrive, and reasoned that those colds and strep throats are always from too many goodies or too much sugar, and from toxins building up. So I reasoned that the best way to get rid of the body's toxins is to flush them out. If a full barrel of water (or body, as we are a high percentage of water)—if a barrel has too much of a toxin in the mix, the best way to reduce the toxin is to add more clean water as an equal amount overflows out with each addition, and the mix will gradually have higher and higher amounts of clean pure water and less and less of impurities. So I immediately began drinking lots of water—4 or 5 glasses the first hour, then a glass every hour till I went to bed—and having nothing else, a 12 to 18-hour fast perhaps, except lots of water. It meant lots of trips to the bathroom, but it worked. Amazingly, I could feel the pain of swallowing decrease the first hour and was all gone within 2 or 3 hours. I have done it many times and it works every time. I haven't been to the doctor for strep throat in 30+ years. And it worked again last night into today. The pain of swallowing decreased the 3rd glass, within a half hour, and was gone in 2 or 3 hours. The cold always takes longer, 2 or 3 days of more than usual water and eating less or more wisely. Then I understood why doctors say "plenty of fluids." However, not just any fluid. Soda pop or other sugar drinks will make it worse. Even fruit juices (mild natural sugars) are kind of okay, but do not work as well as pure water. Strep can lead to rheumatic fever, which damages the heart. So I figure this rather natural cure for strep throat (and colds) is worth sharing, though doctors have been saying "plenty of fluids" for decades, but they never added why nor specified what kinds of fluids, it seems.

January 4, 2026: Weigh 212.

Jan 6: Weigh 210 ½. Fasted and prayed much for Silvia and Mack and truth and right, and the Lord very much answered Silvia's and my prayers.

Jan 7: Traveled to Price for Silvia's meetings, which lasted nearly the whole day Thursday. On the way back (Jan 8), it was clear dry roads all the way, but started snowing before Moab. As we climbed from Moab to Monticello, the elevation rose from 4,000 to 7,000 feet and the snow got worse. Silvia screamed a few times when semi-trucks came from the other direction as there hardly seemed room for two vehicles to pass. It was very nerve-wracking. When we arrived at the bottom of Peter's hill going north, a deputy with stopped car was parked to stop us all. Several slide-offs, trucks and cars, on the road up the hill had them close the road for an hour while they worked to get the vehicles unstuck and cleared from the road. After an hour we followed a couple of snow plows up at 5-10 mph and reached Monticello after a half hour drive up Peter's Hill, usually a few minutes. We stayed in a motel.

It reminded us of an even more harrowing drive over Vail Pass in Colorado, Nov 1974, when we drove with babies Shana and Joseph to Denver for Rehab training. Snowstorm came in, stopped dozens of us who could not go up the steep curvy roads at 12,000 feet after many wheels packed the snow to ice and made the road slicker and slicker. It got dark with miles of stopped cars wondering if we had enough gas to keep heaters going and to get to the next station, or do we freeze while we wait? Finally, a snowplow came by plowing snow and spreading sand over the road. We all followed, snaking the curves slowly. Steep drop-offs on the right made it more unnerving.

Jan 13: Weigh 209 ½.

Jan 18: Last night had a dream of Joseph. In it I realized that I should have been a more fun spark in his life and more attentive and loving toward him. But most could say that of themselves, except a rare few. I was a somewhat blah dad, not overly thrilled with life myself, though I should have forgotten myself and exuded more positive overflow more often.

We went to Navajo Mtn for Silvia to attend chapter meeting, a long 12-hour day, 9 to 9. Willie Grayeyes was very rude to Silvia, but it backfired on him. The folks could see through it and were more friendly to Silvia thereafter. As Silvia reported on legislative meetings coming up, a woman asked Grayeyes how often he went to legislature. He hummed and stumbled, because he never went. The two SUWA puppets never did anything but obey their SUWA puppeteers. Most in the Navajo Mtn audience were on Silvia's side, being embarrassed at Grayeye's rudeness to her.

10 pm, just finished watching the most amazing documentary, of the Uruguayan rugby team, crashed in the Andes, Oct 13, 1972 enroute to Chile. Of 45 on the plane, twenty some survived the crash. Searchers had wrong information on what part of mtn and called off searches after 10 days. Then an avalanche hit them and killed a few more. Later they had to eat their dead friends to stay alive. After 2 months, three of them, nearly starved to death, began walking over the 22,000-foot mtn after mtn, for like 12 days, toward Chile. Came to a river they could not cross, but saw a man. They threw a message on a rock to that man on the other side, who took it to authorities. Next day, came a helicopter. They were finally rescued after 72 days of surviving starving at elevations near 22,000 feet. Sixteen of 45 were still alive. They guided the copter pilot over the mountains to the wreckage and other survivors, cheering as it approached. I had read the story years ago, but to learn an hour's worth of more details and see the survivors talking about it years later. It was moving to awe-inspiring. Everyone should see that, to dwarf most other trials.

Dr John Robertson wrote the following tribute in support of my research and/or to accompany it:

Establishing a valid relationship among two or more languages that can be agreed upon by competent linguists, requires two things: methods coupled with factual data. Such relationships, be they descendant (e.g., Romance languages, descended from Latin) or borrowing (e.g., half of English vocabulary being borrowed from French/Latin), must be founded on sound methods and data.

In 2015, Brian Stubbs published a book that made a remarkable claim, which requires remarkable evidence to be believed: that an American Indian language family, Uto-Aztecan, is partially descended from or borrowed extensively from Near Eastern languages. Without method and data, this claim would be preposterous. An American Indian language descended from or borrowed extensively from three Middle Eastern Languages? To that point, in 1748 David Hume said, "A wise man ... proportions his belief to the evidence", and "[n]o testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavors to establish."

I have said before in reviewing Stubbs' 2015,

"[a]s a practitioner of the comparative historical method for 40+ years, [with over 60 publications in refereed journals and books], I believe I can say what Stubbs's scholarship does and does not deserve: It does not deserve aprioristic dismissal in the face of the extensive data he presents. It *does* deserve authoritative consideration because, at least for me, I cannot find an easy way to challenge his method and the breadth and depth of the data he presents."

In defense of his claim, Stubbs produces expansive data, which speak for themselves. The data are couched in his careful application of the comparative historical method as well as establishing the logic of borrowing — as do all his academic achievements as a Uto-Aztecanist. Recognized as a major contributor to Uto-Aztecan scholarship, both in journals and his many papers presented at conferences, he has made many significant contributions that have expanded the understanding of Proto-Uto-Aztecan itself. In fine, his overall contribution as a Uto-Aztecan reconstructionist is on par with any of his colleagues.

-John Robertson

Jan 27: Hi family, We celebrated a happy birthday for Orlo (Jan 24). To show you how busy Grandma is, yesterday we left Blanding 5-ish to get to Monticello for her 6 pm meeting, then we drove to Green River to stay there, where Silvia did 2 meetings via zoom the next morning in the motel room 9 – 10 and 10-11. Then we left to Price where Silvia is now doing another zoom meeting 1 to 2 pm in the Carbon County building, that we are well familiar with doing her monthly 7-county meetings. Then we will drive to Lindon to make another key for the 2018 Hyundai that we bought for a good price, I think, 13,000 when book was near 16,000 and a new one is 37,000. It will cost $800 to make a new key for it, the electronic kind that you carry in pocket and push buttons, etc. It only came with one key, but we never have a problem losing keys, right? These newbies are niceys and are snazzola, etc—but in lots of ways I liked the old models better, make a new key for $5 at Ace Hardware, no computers that cost

hundreds to replace, etc. Just an engine, alternator, battery, radiator, etc. They were simple and worked, had heaters, could push start, use a hill, could roll down a window with a handle no matter whether the fuse died, etc. The 2nd key costs more than my first 7 cars–25, 75, 75, 200, 400, 300 white van, 700 blue van—and more than the lowest 5 added together. But these last two cars purchased will probably last longer than I will. Then we drive to SLC for Silvia's legislative meetings at the Capitol Tuesday night to Friday. Then meetings in Blanding Saturday, in Monticello Monday, then Tuesday to Friday in SLC again next week. That travel is why her chauffeur needs a good vehicle.

Two dumb things I did, one was years ago, the other last week. Years ago at the Hopi gas station in Tuba City, AZ, I went in, gave them a 20 for gas, then went back to my car at the pump and drove away. Yeah, I forgot to put the gas in that I had just paid for. Absent-minded, thinking about something else. Maybe I'm getting near handing-in-my-keys stage. Then last week, I gave the attendant a $50 and told him that I'd fill it up and then come back and get the change. Well, this time I did remember to put the gas in (20-some), but forgot to go back and get my change. These philanthropic donations to gas stations all over the Intermountain West—I gotta quit. Maybe I deserve to have a gas station named after me: brian's brainless must-pay, but fill-up-optional gas station.

So yeah, I need to finish the other six language families while I still have a brain. It only took 30 years to do Uto-Aztecan, so the next 6 language families times 30. 180 years? I won't make it, but I'll keep working at it until I can't.

And all of you are spared. When I was 30s and 40s, I used to think maybe one of my children or grandchildren might become a linguist and continue the work (they'd have the best UA library in the nation, better than universities), but by age 50, I thought, "Sure glad they didn't, because I wouldn't want to wish that on anyone, let alone someone I love. It is fascinating and fun if you love it, but it would be an awful tedious drag and drudgerous ball and chain otherwise." Devoting 2/3 of all free hours for all of adult life, with no income from it, only happens if really interested. As said previously, some youth dream of being a pro athlete or movie star, but no one dreams of being a Uto-Aztecanist. Maybe it's the difference between making millions vs. losing only a little bit that leaves some fields wide open. It is also easier to become the world's best when less than a dozen are interested in studying the 40 languages needed to be a UAnist vs. the millions trying to be the best basketball player. Anyway, I'm glad you're all spared. Love you all, bro bri, deteriorating dad, data-grappling gramps, a heap of hernias hubby

Jan 31: Today I met my cousin, Elizabeth Smart. She gave an excellent presentation here in Blanding at the local conference. Malin and Silvia enjoyed the conference even more. I asked Elizabeth if she was descended from Thomas Sherratt Smart. She said she was. I explained that his daughter Charlotte Elizabeth Smart Parkinson, married my gr gr grandfather Samuel Rose Parkinson, which makes us about 4th cousins. She responded pleasantly, seeming intrigued and a tad glad to hear such.

Feb 1, Sunday: message to my posterity: Dear family, I remember years ago hearing an atheist on TV say that the Bible is false because it says the patriarchs lived to over 900 years, which is impossible he claimed, and then God told Adam that in the day he partook of the fruit that he would die, yet he did not die that day, but lived 930 years, so either God lied or he does not exist, and the atheist opted for the latter. As a huge counter to that, I say he is wrong, and that it is very unwise to think we know very much and to criticize God's words, which are always true. Puny man may change, misinterpret, rewrite, leave out important details, or mess up God's words in a variety of ways, but God's words are always true, if man hasn't messed them up. Some may have already heard this, but for those who haven't, I repeat. That's what we old people do, is repeat ourselves, I hear, so I'm just doing my job, and giving my posterity some good advice in valuing God's words.

What reminded me of all this was today's SS lesson in which Enoch was called of God to teach the people, and Enoch felt inadequate and replied "I … am but a lad, and all the people hate me, for I am slow of speech…" (Moses 6:31). Verses 25 and 26 say he was about 65 years old at the time. The 900-plus years that the patriarchs lived are often noted, but the ages at which their first child was born are often ignored. Not always "the" oldest, but either the oldest or close to the oldest. Let's look at them:

Patriarch	age at firstborn	age at retirement (death)
Adam	130	930
Seth	105	912
Enos	90	905
Cainan	70	910
Mahalaleel	65	895
Jared	162	962
Enoch	65	translated
Methuselah	187	969
Lamech	182	777
Noah	? 450, 492, 500	950

Noah probably had older children, some of whom may have been translated with Zion and others who may have died in the flood (Moses 8:15). The above are when Japheth, Shem, and Ham were born.

The Lord tells us that the age of man will be 120 years (Moses 7:17), so the Lord understood what was happening, though we don't. The ages from Shem to Joseph of Egypt are Shem 600, Arphaxad 438, Salah 433, Eber 464, Peleg 239, Reu 239, Serug 230, Nahor 148, Terah 205, Abraham 175, Isaac 180, Jacob 147, Joseph 110. Note that the first three generations born after the flood (Arphaxad to Eber) had half the lifespan of the patriarchs, then the next 6 generations, from Peleg to Abraham, had about half of that. So after the flood, ages went down fast, even to 120 or less by Joseph's 110 and Moses lived 120 (until translated). Even now, healthy Japanese eaters of veggies and fish approach 120, we hear. Consider this, the patriarchs from Adam to Noah, who lived before the flood, generally lived to more than 900 years. Maybe Lamech (777) got covid or something. But the average age at which they started having children was about 115 (rough estimate in my head, you can do exact math, if you want). That is not counting Noah, since we don't know when he started.

Consider, if life was as it is now, or if people reached puberty at 12, they would not wait until they are 100 years old to get married and start having children!!! The 100-year marrying age strongly suggests that time was different then than it is now. Scientists in too many fields assume that things have always been as they are now. No, they cannot assume that. Consider some factors: One, Enoch and his people took a chunk of earth with them; Joseph Smith said a few pieces of earth have left and will return. Einstein's relativity says that a larger earth of more mass would slow time down. Two, who knows whether the Lord had the earth going around the sun faster, then slowed our orbit from flood time to Jacob. Why did the Mayan calendar (originally a Jaredite calendar, my guess, as the Mayans are part Jaredite)—why did it have two different year lengths, a 260-day year and a 365-day year? The Jaredites were not long after Noah. Could it be because a year was only 260 days before the flood, before the Lord later slowed the earth's orbit to 365 days? That faster orbit would also slow time down, and then the slower orbit would speed time so that we age faster. The math of those two does not make enough difference, but— Three, the Lord can easily have mankind's cellular deterioration (aging) change as needed in his plans. And those are only three things that my tiny brain can think of. Who knows the number of tools in the Lord's bag of tricks, who has all knowledge of all the laws of physics, etc? In other words, scientists cannot assume that things were always as they are now. If things like those were in play, that is, if time was different, then in seems-like time, a 120 or perhaps a 140-year life would seem the same as a 900-year life, if the Lord employed such a bag of tricks. Or a 900-year life in slow-motion would seem like a 120-year life to someone experiencing it as things are now.

Now, consider this 120-year lifespan, that the Lord said would be, and that some really healthy Japanese somewhat approach. (One article said that Japan has nearly 100,000 people over 100, active, working in gardens, but the oldest is only 114.) Regardless, 100 is 1/9 of 900, so in proportion to age 100 of a 900-year life, marrying at 100 would be like marrying about age 14 of a 120-year life or age 15 ½ of 140-year life. And that makes sense. Ages 14 to 18 used to be marrying ages for my aunts and previous

generations, until just recently. So scientists need to not be so stupid as to assume that things have always been as they are now.

Notice also that the radio-carbon dating works well to about 4000, maybe 5000 years ago, in aligning with historical events whose time is known. But further back than that, it gets wacky or way off real fast. Well, could that be because before the Fall, when time was not, when there was no death, no corruption, no aging, no deteriorations, no decay, no lessening of subatomic energy levels—that would blow to pieces a system that measures time by rates of decay or deterioration? It would make it completely obsolete and worthless!!! Science has made some wonderful discoveries and progress in many ways, but they are also wrong at times. They need to think about God's words in their figuring. I know lots of thinking errors in linguistics and anthropology, some of which could be easily straightened out if they would not refuse to believe God could be right in ways contrary to their theories. As Isaiah says of the last days, the wisdom of the wise shall perish. Because one by one, their theories that are contrary to the words of God, will be shown to be folly.

Now, as for Enoch being only a lad at age 65—Yes, 65 of 900 in proportion to a 120-year life would have Enoch being about 12 (or less) when called to preach repentance to the world, and decent numbers believed him and did repent and became the city of Enoch. How many twelve-year-olds do not feel self-conscious about their public-speaking abilities? "I'm slow of speech; I don't impress people when I talk," to paraphrase Enoch's description of his feelings of inadequacy. How would our missionaries come across if sent out at age 12 instead of 18 or 19?

As for Adam dying in the day he partakes of the fruit, remember that once or twice in the Bible and DC, the Lord refers to His day as being 1,000 years to man, and Adam was in God's spheres when told that. The Fall had not yet taken him out of God's presence. So God spoke the truth—900+ years is within that 1,000-year day—and the self-assumed smart ones that accuse God of lying or not existing need to realize that they don't know everything and that God does. Many things we do not understand, and that is reason to simply be humble and study and do what we can until things are clarified in God's own ways in His own time, and not criticize Him. He knows all, we know next to nothing by comparison.

So how long did Adam and Hewwa (Hebrew spelling of Eve) enjoy the garden? Maybe 1 ½ or 2 days—1500-2000 years? If God created them on the 6th day and then rested the 7th, they likely partook of the fruit Monday morning, the start of a new work week. If they partook of it Sunday, it would not have been a day of rest. The Fall ended the hopes of rest and the new work week was underway, probably early Monday morning. Love you all, bro bri, definitely decaying dad, bery busy abuelo, heap-a-hernias hubby

Feb 5: We are now in SLC for Silvia's meetings with the legislature. I did my usual walk from Little America to Harmon's grocery store and back. There were 2 or 3 ACLU folks standing on one corner. As I walked by, one asked me, "Can I speak with you a moment about defending human rights?" Being in a hurry and not being favorably impressed with many of the ACLU doings / activities, I simply said 'no' and walked on. A block away, I thought I should have said, "I have already done a huge amount to save the lives and human rights of thousands, and I'm curious what the ACLU did to help in that? I voted for Trump, and he stopped Biden's trafficking and slave trade of thousands of women and children into slavery. Did the ACLU decry Biden's policies? Or did the ACLU support Trump in his campaign? Did you vote for Trump?" But as is often the case, I don't think of good answers until too late for the time and situation.

Feb 10: Just reconnected with Gary Hatch via email, an old Provo High fellow miler. He was a senior and I was a sophomore spring of 1965, when he was first miler and I was second that track season—61 years ago? Today I also noticed that the cashier young lady at the Monticello grocery store had a notable degree of light in the soul / countenance. Then Silvia told me she is Mack McDonald's middle daughter, Sarah. And Mack's wife is another exceptional person, always presents with class in advocating for the youth and against abuse. And Mack is a very good man. The whole family are such good people. So opposite of all the rumors against Mack. To show how out of control the rumors are, a

new one wafted by recently—that Silvia and Mack are together embezzling county funds. Wow, we do not even claim all that we are rightly owed. We only claim about 2/3 of all we could claim. We often avoid night-time driving by often getting a motel at our own expense, no reimbursement. We do not claim all the meals that we could. When we fill out the monthly reimbursement paper, we intentionally leave off some meals, some motel and traveling expenses. Silvia often buys things for county social events for free, that she does not worry about. Because she defends Mack's wisdom and goodness, the rumormongers have lumped her together with him as targets for their fabrications. To accuse Silvia or us of embezzling funds is laughable, and most people know that. I don't think many are believing that nonsensical rumor, but it shows how dishonest and off-base the creators of the rumors are.

Went to Nephrologist Pandya. GFR up to 62, better than the 40s to low 50s of 6 months ago. So it's improving. But he thought blood pressure 150 / 75 was high. I told him that I was a runner and have always had 60 to 70 points between high and low, never the 40 of the so-called ideal of 120/80. I mean, my low number (75) is lower than 80. Doesn't that count for something? He said, "Yes, I can tell that you're a runner, heart rate 50, but blood pressure is still a little high, and high bp damages kidneys."

Feb 15, Sunday: A wonderful day! Last night Silvia had a dream and saw LaVerne Tate very happy with a beautiful smile. Though a nice dream, Silvia wondered why a dream from/about LaVerne Tate? Then this morning, her grandson, Matt Jeppson, was sustained as our new fifth-ward bishop, with Sam Crane and David Laws as counselors. Yeah, being married to a prophetess 55 years, I try to stay on my toes, but I can't do it all the time; my calves and feet hurt. I'm no ballerino. After the meetings, ~~Matt~~, I mean, Bishop Jeppson introduced me to his wife's father, and Bishop told him that I was the author of *Morsels for the Mind* that he saw or was reading at the Jeppson house. He is from Heber Valley, a commissioner of Heber County, whom Silvia already knew. I told him that ¼ of my ancestry is from Heber Valley, the Ritchies and McAffees. He knew many. I told him that I have another book that he might enjoy more. I went out to the car to get a copy of *Changes*, came back in and did not know where he went. I waited and look around, and though not a huge issue, I prayed that if he would enjoy the book or if it was good that he have it, then may God cause our paths to cross before he leaves. I walked across the gym and he walked in the gym, as we nearly bumped into each other at the gym door by the kitchen. A tender mercy. I gave him the book, and he was glad to get it.

Then I bumped into Alan Ward, choir director. He said, "Brian, we are practicing your song, and the choir loves it." I had given him copies of my new music / setting to *Because I have been given much*. The one in the hymn book is ok, the words and message are wonderful, but some of the harmonies are like sitting on a piano—almost all but one note of the scale being played at the same time sometimes—so I wrote new music for the great words. I submitted it to the music committee for the new hymn book, but it missed the deadline by a bit or something, though I heard from one or two that they liked it. Anyway, Brother Ward told me about a lady who wandered through the church as they practiced my song. She asked if she could sing with them. He said she had a beautiful voice and could sing any part: soprano, alto, or tenor. After the rehearsal, she came up to Alan and said, "Can I keep this copy? This is beautiful. I'm going to have my choir sing it too." She was from out of town. It was a good day.

Wedn Feb 18: Well, diary ol' boy, in contrast to Sunday's good day, I'm presently quite disenchanted with our overly electronic world. Two weeks ago, my phone quit recharging. Tried 3 chargers that used to work fine to recharge. I tried cleaning the plug-in end, but no work. I'm ok with no phone, did my first 70 years of life with no cell phone; my not having one annoys others more than me. I also just paid $800 for an electronic car key; nothing sticks out to put in an ignition. My other car at least had a manual key that worked when the electronic battery died. But this one is round, no insertable key. What happens if it dies when I'm in Green River and cannot drive it until I get back to Provo to get the $800 key recharged or battery replaced. I also hate credit cards. Haven't had one for 20 or 30 years because I don't like them. Silvia's card has been electronically hacked / stolen 3 or 4 times while still in her possession. More paperwork every month, and calling some distant machine in NY or wherever that can't think, to straighten out mix-ups? No thanks. I like cash—simple. First, motels quit taking cash. I

asked a few of them 'why?' They didn't know, or their answers didn't make sense. I despised them for bowing to the International or Global design toward a cashless society so that governments can control people. When BYU quit accepting cash, that was a severe disappointment to me. The reason I heard most often was to avoid temptation to BYU student employees to pocket cash from the cash registers, etc. Well, that didn't make sense. If BYU is an educational institution to prepare young people for life intellectually and morally, and if they're being prepared to be corporate accountants or MBA business tycoons, then isn't it better to let those honesty-levels be tested with cash register contents and learn a lesson now, than sending them into the business world where 6- and 7-digit temptations lurk? I could no longer buy a book or a drink at BYU, but at least they had drinking fountains. Now we are at Little America motel, one of the fanciest in the USA, but no drinking fountains. They barely ceased taking cash two months ago. SLC water tastes too much like Los Angeles water (tastes like purified sewage water), both repulsive. Provo water is a bit better, and Blanding water another level better, and mountain water best, but beyond practicality most days. So I finally got a credit card two weeks ago. I tried 8 times to "certify it." What's the word? Confirm, certify, make it work? But the dumb machine on the other end of the phone would cut me off as too slow or something half way thru reading the numbers, or it could not understand. No real people any more. Have to use electronic gizmos and talk to machines that cannot think or hear very well. So I went to the credit union and they confirmed it for me typing whatever into their computer in seconds. I have used the credit card a time or two, so it does work. So today, it's snowing outside; I'm walking halls in the motel for my sad excuse for a walk this afternoon while Silvia rests. I get thirsty, so I buy an apple juice with my credit card, then I walk some more, I get hungry, so I buy a $9 cinnamon roll at the cafeteria with my credit card. Now I'm thirsty again, but only for water, so I go to buy water at the same little shop here where I bought apple juice an hour ago. It won't take the credit card. $12,000 is in the credit union / bank and a limit of $5,000 on the credit card. I just paid the previous month. So it stops working with less than $50 on it? Probably because I have not used it for 10 days, then suddenly using it 3 times in an hour may have put an automatic freeze on it, cashier said. My wallet never locked shut when I bought 3 things in an hour. And my phone doesn't work to call the credit union to tell them, "Hey, it's me! I'm thirsty. I want a drink of water! The motel won't take cash and your credit card won't buy me a water!" I guess I can go outside and eat snow. I should invite the news stations to come and film me eating snow outside the Little America Motel with a great story: "Poor motel guest, he's thirsty and is outside eating snow on Little America's lawn because they won't take cash and won't take his credit card that is backed by thousands of dollars in the bank and they don't have drinking fountains because they want folks to buy theirs. He thinks he can make it to a store that takes cash. Surely there must be one not far away." Newsman asks a passerby, "Excuse me, Sir, do you know a store near here that takes cash where this old man can buy some water?" Passerby answers, "He can come with me to the homeless shelter. We can get a meal and glass of water there. That's where all of us people stay who couldn't keep up with the electronic world."

Friday, **Feb 20**: Silvia flew to Washington DC with Shana, Aisha, and Holbrook. Silvia caught a ride with others in an Uber to the airport, which saved me a trip, another blessing from Above, a few-second window aligned. I'll stay in Provo to visit professor friends, and research. Had a good visit with Kirk Magleby and Jared Riddick. Among the hour-plus with Kirk, he said that his wife, a retired English teacher, loved *Morsels for the Mind* and said that I'm a really good writer, but I won't list the superlatives she said, out of respect for those who may think otherwise. The interviews with Zander Sturgill and Kirk have done well: 70,000-plus views in 4 days. And enjoyed a visit with David Calabro.

All the Magleby's that I have known are wonderful people. When I was a teen, Frank Magleby in our Pleasant View 3rd home ward was a kind, quiet man, BYU art professor. Mayva Magleby Moon (with her husband Kay Moon and family) is as wonderful as exist. Silvia lived with them when first coming to Utah, and her brother Marvin Magleby is also a great guy. And Kirk Magleby, cousin with all those Maglebys to varying degrees, is another generous, capable, kind, and stalwart Magleby.

Monday, Feb 23: I had good visits with PV III ward Bishop Brian Jackson, Dallin Dixon Oaks, Dirk Elzinga, Lisa Morgan, and Kerry Hull.

Tuesday, Feb 24: Wonderful hour-long visit with John Gee, an impressive Egyptologist, deeply knowledgeable in Hebrew, Arabic, Akkadian, and more. He told me of another Egyptologist, Krystal Pierce, so I visited her too, UCLA PhD, like Kerry Muhlstein. And a good visit with Aaron Schade, our Phoenician scholar. Another good day.

Tuesday, March 3: A hard day for Silvia. She went to bed last night at 4:30, got 2 hours sleep, and was feeling sick with worry and work, but two wrong things were delayed.

Thursday March 5: Eric told me that our cousin, David Heslington, is working at the Roots Tech event in the Salt Palace in SLC today. As I'm in SLC and Silvia at the Capitol with legislature, I decided to go to Roots Tech to meet him. It was wonderful to see him again, such a good, down-to-earth, humble man, and so capable (mission president to Spain at 39, conducts choirs, works at BYU as a family history specialist). He was 13 and I was 15 last time I saw him, 62 years ago. We were both quiet young teens then, neither of us at all talkative, but it was great to see what can happen from teens to seventies, when trying to abide in the Vine; we both changed a lot. He and his wife are admirable people. His mother Elva Stubbs (Heslington) is Dad's oldest sister (2nd of 10), my Dad 8th of 10. Her picture is at back with her father John Stubbs at the graveside of their wife and mother who died in the WWI flu epidemic.

Thursday March 12: The infrastructure or 8-county meeting went well, always pleasant, and the attorneys know the rules and give good advice on procedure, not pushing their own agenda.

Friday March 13: The Republican Lincoln dinner in Monticello. Two highlights. One highlight was the new Monticello Mayor Kevin Dunn, who was happy to meet Silvia, had heard so many good things about her and not one negative thing, and was looking forward to meeting her. A great thing for Silvia, after all the guff she bears with from a few in the county government.

The other highlight was Jason Chaffetz, the keynote speaker, played football with Shane Shumway for BYU, former Utah congressman, said many interesting things. When he went to congress, he thought all the congressmen, dems and republicans, were patriots and loved their country, but only differed on the best way to improve things, but he learned that many hate America, esteem America as a bad country that needs an overhaul, toward socialist Europe or worse, They are not interested in your freedom, but want to control you, want for you to have less freedom and for them to have more control, more power over you. It is literally a battle of good versus evil.

Mark Levin's book, *The Democrat Party Hates America*, spells it out, and Levine spells it out clearly on every weekend show. Not all Democrats do. Many good partriots are among the regular population Dems, who don't agree with the radical extremes that the leaders are moving toward or are simply uninformed and not aware of what is really happening. Jason Chaffetz said he speaks with President Trump often, who does things differently, but like him or not, how much better is he for our country than Kamala or Biden or Obama! Chaffetz spoke of the hypocrisy of the Dems in their ridiculous criticisms of Trump, like Schumer and the Dem team's sudden new sqwak about the empty oil reserves, when it was Biden who emptied them to bring down gas prices just before the 2022 midterms, after he closed the pipeline and had done everything he could to destroy the oil industry, but they never complained then nor the 3 years since, and Trump is filling them again, but at so many millions of gallons a day, it'll take years, and has to be purchased with tax dollars. Yet suddenly it's Trump's fault.

There were some good lighter moments too. Chaffetz said, "I had wonderful parents. My parents told us kids, if you ever ever need anything, just come to us, and we'll teach you how to get along without it." Another speaker said, "In the old days, everyone had horses and only the rich people had cars. Now everyone has cars and only the rich people have horses."

March 17, Tue: Today's county work session went well. All 3 commissioners and Jens and Mack had good discussion in working over the Policy and Procedures and making changes. Harvey initiated and Silvia backed getting the term Commission Administrator changed back to County Administrator—huge! Not the 3 commissioners gofer boy, as some want to demote him, but the administrator helping all county

departments. Mack's knowledge and background shone throughout the discussions, and Jens was pleasant and helpful.

March 21: Have much enjoyed reading Henry B. Eyring's biography, like p. 447, "Continuous revelation seems to mean continuous work." P. 456, he was asked, on 24-hour notice due to illness of Elder Jensen, to go to the 150-year anniversary of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, an event hoping to bring together or reconcile to whatever degree possible between the Church and the descendants of the victims' relatives, and in the context of recent bad press, like PBS 4-hour documentary, *The Mormons*, in which the massacre was featured prominently (sounds like PBS), and another movie of a murderous Mormon bishop acting under the direction of Brigham Young, he read the Church's prepared statement disclaiming Church leadership involvement, but also "profound regret" of the tragedy and some members involvement, with emotion breaking his voice. "The audience responded with unexpected graciousness, rising in a standing ovation as he finished. Many of the victims' relatives embraced Hal tearfully."

March 22: Kia's birthday! A good day! Pleasant family gathering (birthday dinner). The choir sang my version (new music) of "Because I Have Been Given Much." Later, our trio played the piano, violin, cello arrangement that I wrote last week of "Christ the Lord is Risen Today", p. 200, to be played this Wednesday at the stake center. Annette Adams (pianist) and Ketherine Hiatt (violinist) both commented on how beautiful their counter-melody variations are. They were also kind and complimenting Wake Einerson, my 5th-grade cello student of 2 months, who joined us also playing cello.

March 25: Had a dream last night to grow in love and appreciation: Notice the daily efforts of others to do good. I saw a Native Andean man, coming out of retirement to serve his people in some position. I saw others, not remembered now, but each was going about some rather ordinary task(s) which were good and did others good. My heart filled with appreciation for the good people simply doing good—things rather ordinary, yet as if through Heaven's eyes, I was deeply moved by the simple good that people do, yardwork, chores, a day's work at one's occupation, anything that does people good.

March 29, Sunday: a blessed day, God with me in heart-warming ways. Elmer Hurst passed on. Good to see Peggy Pincock again, visiting today.

March 30, Monday: 55 years with Silvia and 55 years of her sacrifices for me and our children.

April 3: Silvia's birthday, and we enjoyed a visit from and lunch with my cousin David Heslington, his wife Linda, their daughter Rachel and granddaughter Sarita—great people. Then a zoom meeting with my siblings and David and family. Rachel and her husband opened, manage, and teach at an English school in Puebla, Mexico, 23 years now.

April 5: Great General Conference and a tender mercy. I decided to walk to the college and back for circulation before a day of sitting through meetings. On my way back, met Bret Jacobsen in his van, then his wife Marci Jacobsen also walked out of Elmer Hurst's house. Bret's mom is widow of Elmer, whose funeral is tomorrow. Bret and Marci lived in Blanding until a decade ago, when they moved to Parowan, where Bret took a vice principal position. It was good to see them again. I gave them copies of *Morsels, Changes*, and *Anecdotes*. The chance of their coming out of the house the moment I walked by is zilch, except it be a kind arrangement from Above.

April 6: Elmer Hurst's funeral. Quiet, smart, hard-working, wonderful man, 90. Good kids—Val, Diane, Ross, Brian—and families. Irene Jacobsen, his widow, and her three sons and families also good people. Elmer has been one of my favorite people ever since we were home-teaching companions 15 or 20 years ago. My kind of guy—we did our job, but not interested in fluff beyond that. As we talked for the 2 or 3 years that we worked together, we found that we think alike on about everything—way too much alike. Dangerous, Silvia says. I'm so glad that I bumped into him one week before the unsuccessful surgery. I parked at Phil's accounting office for business, came out and almost got in the wrong car, when I noticed Irene and Elmer in the car, which was a white van just about like mine. Enjoyed a friendly chat a couple of minutes before going to my car parked behind them. A wonderful last chance to chat with my friend Elmer, a week before his transfer.

April 10: Went to AZ, enjoyed watching Juli-Hannah in *Frozen*. She did so well; it was good to see Shana and family again.

April 15: Went to bed quite dejected at the cold unfair treatment of many in the world, yet awoke after a wonderful dream of hugs from many good people.

April 20: a great Kigalia concert. Wake Einerson played Jon Schmidt's "All of Me" amazingly well; Annette Adams played a nice song she wrote; and Jeane Kirk (married name?) became an opera singer in NM, then moved back to UT, and she sang a song like an opera singer. Afterwords, I told her, "I'm glad I got you in one of my musicals before the price went up." She laughed and said, "I love your musicals."

April 21: County Commission meeting today was revealing and despicable in many showing their stripes. County Attorney Mitch Maughan (CAM) told some bold face lies. One was his saying that Silvia camps out in County Administrator McDonald's office most of the day every day. What? I know exactly how much time she spends in the County building, because I am there too. She never goes to his office except a few minutes before or after the twice-a-month commission meetings or another occasional meeting, which might amount to a total of two hours a month, not the 100-plus hours that Mitch's wild exaggeration amounted to. So Silvia objects to defend herself, "Who is saying that?"

And Mitch Maughan says, "That's what the dept heads say!"

Silvia: "Who? Which ones?"

CAM: all of them. Then he turns to the audience full of dept heads and said, "Let's open it up and ask them?" But none of them said anything.

That is such a despicable display of Mitch's nature to say such a big lie against Silvia in a county-wide public meeting.

April 22: While walking and praying, I felt a peace this morning.

April 24: I wrote a **Letter to the Editor** that I figured Silvia would not want me to send to the paper, but my life history can include my **Letter to the Editor**:

Last county commission meeting April 21 (about 31:40 into it), County Attorney Maughan (CAM) said, "Commissioner Stubbs (CS) meets with the County Administrator **EVERY DAY** [emphasis his]. She just goes and camps out in his office." **CS** asked, "Can I respond to that?" **CAM**: "I'm not through yet." Twenty-two minutes later (53:40), she is permitted to speak and **CS** asks again: "I don't know what you mean camping out?" **CAM**: "It's pretty well known that you go into Mack's office and stay most of the day. That happens continually and repeatedly. That comes from not me. **CS:** From who? **CAM:** From everybody in the building. Let's ask them if you want." Curiously, many were there. **CS** tries to ask a question and **CAM** says, "we're not going to get into that." Interesting time to cut that subject, after an outrageous accusation and as she tries to defend herself and track the source of the lie.

Now for the truth. I know exactly how much time she spends in that building, because I am there also, reading or researching. Twice a month, she averages a half hour to an hour after most commission meetings talking to the County Administrator and other county personnel, visiting many more employees than one. I often walk down the hall, listening for her voice to find out which office she is in. That totals one or two hours per month, a long way from the 100 hours (of 160 in 4 weeks) needed to equal "most of the day every day." It would have been interesting to see who answers when asked, to see who is feeding CAM the lies about her "camping out in his office most of the day every day" when it's an hour or two per month. She does not even stop in Monticello except the two days a month of commission meetings, occasionally a third time for another meeting. In fact, the county administrator said that Commissioner Lori Maughan spends much more time in the Administrator's office than Commissioner Stubbs does, which is fine. No criticism there. One should consult with the one most knowledgeable in county operations. Another bit of humor in rumor, have you heard that Commissioner Stubbs and the County Administrator are embezzling from the county? Wow! Commissioner Stubbs claims about half the

miles, meals, and motels that she could. She's the most generous person I know, always giving. Has given away two of my vehicles, so far.

Before that commission meeting, she had just finished a 12-hour Sunday at Oljato and Navajo Mountain. She works about 70 hours a week at that part-time job (7 days a week), doing her work and meetings from quarterly visits to Navajo Mountain (350-mile roundtrips) and north to Price, SLC, etc. No one knows how well and how much she does. Observers also ought to keep in mind that for two of the three commissioners, English is a second language. Assembling thoughts in a second language is more difficult than for fast talkers in a native language, but substance is independent of speed and eloquence. In spite of a few inventors in the rumor mill, most county employees are good, kind, hard-working people, and she loves them. I've never known one with more love for people, even extending to those who mistreat her. I'm not so good at that. — Brian Stubbs

April 25: Drove from Blanding to Boise, ID, on my birthday, to do a presentation to the Institute faculty of the Boise-Nampa area. From Provo to SLC, heavy traffic kept slowing down to 20, though it was Saturday, not typical rush hour, and one time a guy going fast could not stop in time, so he jumped in my lane to avoid the car in front of him, and almost hit me. I had to swerve and almost lost control.

However, once safely in the motel, I walked to a gas station with donuts for sale and said to the cashier, "I'll buy this donut for my birthday cake." The young man behind me pulled out a $5-bill and wanted to give it to me as a birthday present. I smiled, pleasantly surprised, but declined and thanked him for his kindness. Then all 3 in the store wished me a happy birthday. It was a nice moment among strangers.

April 28: The presentation to the Institute faculty of the Nampa-Boise area went well. About 70 attended, mostly faculty with a few spouses and students and other public. I took a box of books, 42 *Changes in Languages*, and gave them all away after the presentation, then started driving toward St George where Silvia has her meetings. Stopped at RSC to ask about the books, and Don Brugger and Devan Jensen kindly gave me theirs for my author copies. They'll be replenished, yet it was nice of them.

May 1: We did Silvia's meetings, then started home Th, broke down at Parowan. The car hobbled to the mechanic shop 2 blocks from Mountain View Lodge where we got a room. The mechanic spent much time on it the next day, Friday, and Friday afternoon told us the engine was gone. So we paid him for his work and to tow it to St George Hyundai dealer. He thinks the engine is under extended warranty. Malin will rescue us tomorrow, 3rd day in Parowan. And coincidentally, Shana's phone accidentally called me, so she told me of someone at BYU Women's Conf asking Shana to take a picture, then in the group was Marci Jacobsen, who asked Shana, "Are you related to Silvia Stubbs?" "Yes, my mom." Marci lives in Parowan, and Shana told her, "That's where my parents are stuck now."

May 2: Malin left Blanding at 4 a.m. (early riser is an understatement for him, 4 a.m. is usual) and he brought us home. Bless our rescuer. After we arrived in Blanding, I bought the weekly Wedn April 29 paper. It has County Attorney Maughan's lies about Silvia on the front page, but at least also has Silvia's attempt at a refutation before they cut her off. The bad Facebook comments against Silvia now make sense. On Friday, Facebook comments appeared that about broke her heart and mine: "Silvia is not the county commissioner we thought she would be" and "she sides with Mack." They have no idea what they are talking about. Silvia and Mack are the best friends this county has. Some have regularly sided with SUWA's leaning in the LUDMO, etc.

The comments against Silvia made more sense after seeing the article. Some evidently believed it, though anyone with eyes to see and brain to think should see in the paper's article how unreasonable and off-base County Attorney Maughan is in his diatribes against Silvia.

May 4: Yesterday I was very perturbed (understatement) with Mitch's lies about Silvia and publishing them twice throughout the whole county for the whole county, from the recorded meeting and then read in the paper of his totally untrue fabrications, because a percentage of readers do believe what they read in the paper. In the afternoon, I read and was much moved by DC 6:36 "Look unto me in every

thought, doubt not, fear not." Did that intently most of the last 24 hours, then today, I gained some peace in spite of the lies and dirt that Mitch seems inclined to throw at Silvia and Mack. She felt peace too.

Jesus said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you … and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. For ye shall have great joy and be exceedingly glad, for great shall be your reward in heaven." That applies; God wanted her to run, so she is doing His work and her best. Then I thought of the angel's words to Joseph Smith, "your name will be had for good and evil among all nations." That has been going on for 200 years. Though he is in Heaven, watching all the lies still being circulated about him by millions of people for 200 years (for Jesus 2,000 years), both see the big picture. The liars are like children prattling nonsense while the rewards and eventual justice only grow in enormity. Then I thought of the venom hurled at my research by more than we can know, though it stands as true, no successful critics have emerged, and the vile sentiment will continue long after I'm gone. Though miniscule compared to the former two, it took some doing to be free of feeling any angst about it, but I haven't been bothered for a few years now, perhaps because I can and have written rebuttals that clarify the falseness of the accusations, for any interested. But Silvia cannot publish all the details needed to clarify issues circulating against her.

May 9: Went to Gary's daughter's house, Angela and Brian Hays, in Moab, for a wonderful visit with my old high school running friend Gary Hatch and his wife Gayle, daughter Angela, children—61 years since I last saw Gary in 1965, he in 12th grade and myself in 10th that track season.

May 10, Sunday: I usually shovel snow 8 or 10 times per winter, but I have not shoveled snow for two winters now. This last winter's snow pack was 29% of normal, the reservoir being way down. In sacrament meeting, about 3 rows ran out of water half way. The deacons did a good job of scrambling about to find trays with sufficient cups to finish serving those rows. While the deacons were scurrying about for more water, I leaned over and said to Malin, "That's how low on water we are this year."

They also announced that all the men would come up to sing "Love at Home" for the "special" musical number this Mother's Day. Usually when the time comes for a special number, the participants stand up and make their way to the front, but this time nobody moved. The counselor had to stand up and announce it again and invite all the brethren to come forward. Then that third of the audience stood up and filled the stand. Women in the audience said it was quite the sight, perhaps not as impressive in sound, but the 80-to-100 men on the stand was the largest men's choir I've ever seen in Blanding. Brooklyn Pincock, pianist already on the stand, offered me a book, but I said, "No, I'll make up my own part." I made up variations and counter melodies, some of them nice enough that I'll have to make an instrumental arrangement of them. From the back, Silvia said she could see my mouth moving to 1/8th notes, when there were no 1/8th notes in the music. So she knew I was "creating."

Late 1990s—yes, it's out of order, I remembered later—Kline Carroll (bishopric or scout leader at the time) was taking the ward scouts (ages 12-18) on a day adventure through Dark Canyon one summer day, and I volunteered to go along and help. Dark Canyon (between Blanding and Lake Powell) is a long narrow slot canyon that has been a regular adventure for Blanding folks for generations. For most of the miles, it was 3- or 5- or 10-feet wide with water in the bottom that is cold because it never sees the sun. The canyon was perhaps 50 feet deep; one could look up and see logs 30 feet above that were stuck, jammed in and straddling the two rock sides where former flashfloods had left them. One was usually wading through water waist-deep or anything between 6 inches to 6 feet deep, occasional swimming. That slot canyon is safe enough, though deadly in flashfloods. Kline was in front and I was in back, as we navigated the cold water with 12 to 15 boys between us. Then we heard thunder from the direction upstream toward where the canyon originates. That is not good news. We tried encouraging the boys to move as quickly as possible, but wading waist-deep water and jogging in one-foot water are not conducive to hurry, especially for some stragglers whose "hurry" was limited. I suggested to Kline that I run ahead and see if I could find a nearby exit or high place that would likely be safe if a flashflood did come. He agreed, and I ran ahead when not too deep and swam as fast as I could when deep. Maybe a half mile ahead, I found a place where we could climb a rock slope up to about 30 feet above the water,

but still blocked by cliffs above that, but it would be safe for most flashfloods except the rarest high. I hurried back to the group and we moved them along to that spot until all of us up on that rock slope. We sat there for most of an hour or until well after the thundering had stopped and no flashfloods had come for a half hour after the last noises. As the danger was likely past, we continued on, got to the end, and climbed out of Dark Canyon to safety. Whew!

May 18: The first 2 years with Bruce Adams were a pleasant dream compared to the last 2 years of some unjust maneuverings, which is really sad in that some non-members have said, "That's just the way Mormons are," though most are not, yet sadly too many are in some circles.

Two months ago, Monticello and Blanding stakes fasted for moisture, and some wonder why it was not answered like usual. After seeing the awful treatment and treachery by some members against others, I am not surprised at all that God did not answer that multi-stake fast. See DC 101.

May 2026, after a 3-year process, the BYU & Deseret Book volume, *In the Eyes of the Ancients*, was published and finally came out, in which Chapter 12 "Truths Tongues Tell on a Book of Mormon Language Family" introduces a few of the confirming data, but adds more that I had not published previously, like the term *Nephite(s)* appearing in some languages and terms suggesting Uto-Aztecan came from Northern Israel, evidence that the Nawa have been in central-southern Mexico much longer than the conventional (lack of) wisdom says, and other. I have heard that it is making waves among BYU people.

May 28: Had a free day, so I hiked to the Y and back, to see if I could still do it. Barely. Used to run up it. Now it takes 50 minutes up, 35 back. Old, weak, and slow.

May 29-30: Small Plates conference. Several interesting presentations, saw many friends (BYU scholars mainly), many spoke well of my research and latest article in the BYU volume, *In the Eyes of the Ancients*.

June 14, 2026: Damon Orlo Knight was born to Malin and Madison. Bishop Jeppson set me apart for Gospel Doctrine class prayer-caller-on-er, president I think it's called, and gave me a good blessing, including good health and mind to do my work and teach and other details not recalled.

June 16: I went to Kerri Whitethorne's funeral, daughter of Ed and Ruby. Saw many Dandy family members, as well as Nani and Nathelle Kalauli. Silvia did her commission meeting

June 18: Today was Bruce Lyman Shumway's funeral, wonderful to see his children: Wendell, Susan, JaNae, Jordan, and Shareen. Wonderful people. Some interesting talks. Wendell told that while he and Bruce were fishing at Lake Powell, Wendell standing on a rock cliff. His dad, Bruce, was fishing across the way and hollered at him to get away from there. Wendell did not want to move, he thought it might be a good fishing spot and hesitated, until his dad told him a second time in a voice rare for his dad, a very emphatic insistent voice to get back and away from that place. So he picked up is gear and walked back and away. Not many seconds later came a loud crack and that whole section of cliff broke away and fell into the water, made a huge splash, sent out a large wave, and the rock and debris covered a sizable area below. His dad's obeying the prompting and Wendell's obeying his dad saved his life.

Another son told of another time when Bruce and his boys were fishing at Lake Powell. They left late and it was dark by the time they reached the Lake. They were driving a dirt road along some shore of Lake Powell, up and down and up and down for some way. Then Bruce stopped and said, "We'll camp here." They camped, and in the morning they walked around and discovered that if they had gone over one more hill, they would have fallen in the water.

June 20: A wonderful Stubbs reunion at David Stubbs' cabin in Brighton up Cottonwood Canyon. All 5 siblings were there, most of Eric's family and about 1/3 of the other 4 families. From the Airbnb, Silvia and I rode up with Sarah, Cienna, and Keiton. On the way, Silvia saw a huge American flag and wished she could get such a one for the city to fly. I said, "We can get one with a large flagpole at our house, if the city won't. And we can put in a splash pad too." All laughed a long time.

Then Keiton wondered what language they speak in Heaven when we get over there. I explained a little about the Adamic language that seems to have come from over there, then Sarah said, "That's interesting to think that we once knew a language that we have now forgotten." I added: "I have a few of

those." A few more such quips and I had Cienna laughing enough times in a row that I said: "I'm just trying to brush up on my junior high popularity skills." After more laughter, I admitted, "I was not popular in junior high first time through, so I'm trying again." Cienna said, "I think you made it."

June 26: Crossed paths with Andrea Jeppesen. Nice reminder that a number of good kind ladies are still in the world, in contrast to the less-kind.

June 27: Mayva Moon's funeral, an angel if there ever was one. And it was wonderful to see the Moon children again, and Shelly Singer in the ward. I've witnessed an eloquent speaker now and then, but such a string of several eloquent speakers in a row—can't remember such a streak before. Like Kay's books and writings are as exceptional in expression as excellent as any famous author and better than most. Mayva was fun and delightful, good, positive, loving, and expected the children to do well in school and do their homework.

Out of chronological order, early 1970s: Another example of dishonest manipulation. Sales companies frequent BYU for the armies of generally sharp but poverty-stricken students willing to sell. I was a student at BYU, sorely needed a job, and with Eric attended an invite for selling vacuums. They did an hour of orientation training to 50 of us, then had us all write a paragraph on how we might help their company. I was so turned off by the hype and training narrative that I wrote one sentence: "I don't think I could do a darn thing for your company." I turned it in and left. A few days later, I still had not found a job in the town of 10,000 competitors for 5,000 minimum-wage jobs, so I decided to call that company to see if they could still use another vacuum salesman. The fellow on the other end asked, "Did you come to the training and write a paragraph for us?" After my 'yes', he then said, "Just a minute, let me find your paragraph." I thought, 'wow, this should be good, to see what he says after reading my one sentence'; but he came back after a half minute and said, "Yes, you wrote a great paragraph; come down and we'll get you started." So I knew he was lying and he confirmed my suspicions of phoniness in too many sales companies. I said "Never mind" and hung up. I did acquire a janitorial job, so we did not starve.

July 8: Last night had a dream that I was being trained in a job of winterizing houses in Alaska. Woke up from that dream quite happy that I was still little ol' me in Blanding and retired.

Another out-of-chronological-order insertion: When we came from U of U and returned to Blanding, fall of 1982, the high school was also looking for a "special programs" teacher. A number of Ute boys were disrupting several classes in the school, so SJHS decided to take those half dozen out of the regular classes and put them all in one class in a trailer all day and hire a teacher to teach them all the subjects all day: English, math, history, etc. Not many know all the subjects, so guess who took the job? We did a little PE too. They'd occasionally break out wrestling one another with very little provocation. I was told I cannot touch them, so it's good that they wanted to wrestle each other. I'd let them wrestle awhile, then say something like, "Had enough? Anyone have a different answer to the previous question?" They'd usually climb back up onto their seats and we'd resume. If not, let them burn more energy. The more tired they got, the better class went. I like the Ute people is another reason I took the job, though it was challenging, having to constantly think ahead, ever inventing strategies to keep their attention and keep them on task, which I was able to do better than most other teachers, from what I heard. It was a stressful time, and Sheila, age 5, was starting kindergarten and did not like going to school any better than I did. Because her elementary school (now ARL Middle School) was next to the high school, Sheila and I walked the mile together to our respective less-than-favorite places of daily duty. She often cried the first few blocks and I only felt like it. After a half year the school reintegrated the boys back into the regular classes. Maybe the school didn't like my ratio of PE to Math, English. But it was good timing, as I then began my 32-year teaching career at the college. So pleasant.

Perhaps 25-30 years later, Orlando, one of the students, was working in a field 3 miles southeast of town as I jogged by on a daily run. He called, "Mr. Stubbs!" I walked over and we had a pleasant conversation over the barb-wire fence. He apologized for himself and for the whole class for giving me trouble those days long ago. I was moved and impressed that he was so thoughtful and kind to think that

and express that, decades later, and I told him so, that I appreciated his thoughts and words. Not many, if any of the others, are still alive.

July 9: San Juan County's Babylon fire, now over 100,000 acres, is the largest wildfire in the USA right now. It started June 25 from north Elk Ridge to west of the Blue/Abajo Mtns, is being fought by 20 helicopters and 1200 firefighters. It spread from Elk Ridge to west of the Blues to Shea Mtn and north of the Blues, much of it in canyon country, rough terrain for vehicles and men to access. It smothered Blanding in smoke a few days and nights—awful. Sarah got pneumonia-like pains in her lungs, chest and back from the constant smoke. The fire has moved north enough that we are now mostly clear of smoke in Blanding, though Monticello is still getting it bad.

July 11: Christian was baptized by Jorma—a great day.

July 21: Wept periodically this afternoon in prayers for my family.

July 23: No one knows the extent of Silvia's burdens and sufferings. She was again up since 3 a.m. this morning, worrying about county problems, worrying about family, thinking back through the years, trying to think if anything she might have said might have contributed to complexities. Her heart has been hurting for some days. I mention whether she ought to go to the doctor, but she says 'no'.

July 27-28: Dentists Dr Twitchell and Dr Cheryl Lewis, daughter-in-law of Linda Lewis, cleaned my teeth. They did a good job. I opted for no shots for numbing, figuring a new pain and sorrow would at least be a change, but it did not hurt that much. I told Cheryl that I like Linda Lewis, who once gave me a ride home when I was walking from Monticello to Blanding, after my car broke down in Monticello. Speaking of dentists, when I had my root canals done years ago, I was a type A personality at learning, wanting to make good use of all possible study time, so I asked the dentist if I could study a book while he did the root canals. He said "sure." So I held a book above my eyes and out of the way of his work and studied while he drilled and filled the root canals. I did have numbing for that, however, of course.

July31: Silvia bought a cute store sign—"yes, we're open" on one side and "sorry, we're closed" on the other. I found it and asked, "Can we just hang the 'sorry, we're closed' sign on the front door a few days?

Aug 1, Saturday: Damon Orlo Knight was blessed with a sizable group of Palmers, Grovers, Knights, and Stubbs attending. Malin blessed his son with maybe 15 of us helping. I opened my eyes to watch Damon (Damon had his eyes open too), and he was looking skyward and smiling the whole time.

Aug 6: An answered prayer. After Eric and Rhoda connected via genealogical efforts, we siblings last night in our monthly zoom meeting hosted by Shana became acquainted with a cousin whom we did not know. Rhoda Stubbs Langford (between Sheila and Jessica age) is a daughter of David Stubbs, a granddaughter of Lawrence and Rhoda Stubbs, is married to Steven Langford, has 13 children, and is related to those whom the cartel killed in the horrible massacre November 2019. The victims were my cousin Rhonita's grandchildren, the Millers, who are also Rhoda's cousins and our cousins, and the Langfords killed are of her in-laws' family. That event had many leaving their community of La Mora, Mexico, decreasing its population from 300 to 30. Rhoda and her family and a few others are still there. Impressive people. And videos of their farms show it an amazing place and beautiful.

Aug 8: Last day of San Juan County Fair. The paper says Zlotoff from Gilbert, AZ, led the field of 79 runners to win the Monticello 5K in a "blistering" 17:42, a minute slower than my 16 ½ minutes 40 years ago at age 37 and 10 years older than Zlotoff; 2nd place was 2 minutes slower and 3rd place was 3 minutes slower, and only a dozen of us ran 40 years ago.

Aug 12: Glad Silvia had a good day taking some Utah Senators, Representatives, other State people and USU personnel, etc, on a day-long tour of the Uranium mill south and the copper mine north of Monticello. Many had no idea and were impressed with what was happening in SJC.

Aug 23: The Westwater people were very kind to Silvia, thanked her profusely, for the playground, for teaching their children, for being there for them. They praised her as the only one in office ever who came to visit them, and she has visited them regularly.

Sept 11 (25th anniversary of 9-11): We just returned from the UAC conference in Provo. I've known Silvia for 55 years and thought I knew her quite well, yet I am recently being periodically surprised at how well she does at this county commission stuff, how well she can read people, figure out what's really going on—the schemes behind the scenes—and how outgoing and kind she is to nearly all, deserved or not. I've always known she is very smart, but the last little while, in her commission doings, I find that she is smarter than I knew at figuring out what most miss. As English is a 2nd language for her, she cannot always put the words together as quickly or clearly as native speakers, but there is more figuring out going on in that brain than anyone realizes. People have no idea how well Silvia does at that.

Sept 21: I turned on my computer to work/research, and the mandatory ad page featured an article "26 Disadvantages of Being a Linguist." Now they tell me. Just kidding. I couldn't care less, and none were a surprise anyway. I certainly didn't become a linguist for the money. Some of their list: (1) inadequate compensation; (2) intense competition (not many jobs); (3) long hours of solitary research (I did not mind that); (4) mental fatigue from complex linguistic structures / problems (true, but rest when fatigued, like all fields); (5) having to learn many languages for no extra compensation; (6) linguistics is misunderstood and undervalued by the public. Amen! (7) Misunderstanding can lead to a lack of appreciation and support for research. Duh! A few are similarly wimpy, like (8) having to write research grants; and (9) frustration and delays in research when grants are not received. Well, just do the research, grant or not. If I had depended on grants, nothing would have happened of my 30 years of important research in UA that put me at the top of that field. Were others waiting for grants? The other 18 disadvantages are similarly snowflakey. It seems written by a liberal, the complaining about society's labor structure not taking care of us linguists? I became a linguist as needed to do the research that no one else was doing, and it worked. I did what no one else had (establishing that an American language family largely descends from Hebrew, Aramaic, and Egyptian). It took many years to study dozens of language families and identify a handful with promising leads among the 190 languages families, then another 30+ years to work on the one with the most, UA, but I did it with no grants and no job in linguistics per se. Taught college English to feed the family (and me) and researched between classes, evenings, mornings, weekends, ~~while driving~~. I don't do the last one any more.

Sunday, Sept 27: I write here in Navajo Mountain, this Sunday's 10 to 12-hour day of rest (ha!) with travel, while Silvia attends their chapter meeting. No one knows how hard she works, answering emails until 2 a.m. in the morning or starting at 4 a.m. or both, getting 2 or 3 hours sleep many to most nights, then is criticized by some, treated despicably be only a few, but appreciated by most. Watching how she is treated is only my burden, hers greater, being the target. The insertion of the section heading "Part Three: Bearing the Burdens" at 2023, is not for the little stuff happening at me, but for the burdens hitting hard upon those whom I love. Besides Silvia's, each daughter has burdens periodically, the sons-in-law have theirs periodically, and the grandchildren theirs, in the lumps and bumps of their first third of life. Not all are always burdened, but in taking their turns, at any given time, 5 or 10 among those 30-plus souls are well burdened, some a few days, others for years or maybe life. And we are "to bear one another's burden … mourn with those who mourn" (Mosiah 18:8-9), and even if I were permitted to not care and could skip it, I could not. I can't help but sorrow for loved ones burdened. Like the saying "It is hard to be happier than your most unhappy child" (in-law, our children too, or grandchildren). When loved ones suffer, I have no interest in fun, but only feel to pray for and sorrow with them. No one need think me suicidal or clinically depressed: I'm only mourning with those who mourn, but the mourning is deep for some, maybe less for others, even though most may be doing fine. I'm glad for those not in the sorrow cycle presently, but as family grows, the decades of delight seem gradually overshadowed by seasons of sorrow so regularly overlapping that breaths of lighter air are rare. The mourning with those who mourn becomes the norm instead of periodic, or nearer constant than occasional. But moments of joy and delight still dot the otherwise too, but the percentages gradually changed, from 10% weighed down, 60% neutral / regular, and 30% wonderful, to 70 or 80% of one's waking hours mourning with those who mourn, while neutral or wonderful fill fewer, infrequent, smaller slices of the pie.

That all brings to mind the phrase in both DC 63:66 and DC 132:16 “an exceeding and eternal weight of glory” as if weight and glory, or the ability to successfully turn most burdens into glory is a main source of glory. Add to that, the Hebrew root KBD has to do with both ‘be heavy’ and ‘glory / glorify’ which also connects ‘weight’ and ‘glory’. I am not sure that the seeming regular connection of ‘heavy’ and ‘glory’ is cheering? Oh well. I keep going.

Oct 3 and 4: Wonderful conference: Tamara Runia her married son dying unexpectedly; Vai Sikahema, former BYU running back powerful talk, grandparents lost a son from storm; Elder Soares on fasting; Dale Renlund on a man nearly dying but surviving two consecutive heart transplants then complaining about the cold oatmeal; Ronald Rasband on children coming back was good / comforting, only love can bring back, being peacemakers, patient. President Oaks on coming to Christ and mentioned the lost tribes twice.

Mario and Karla Pincock Durrant, having finished 3 years as mission president, visited us between sessions. It was wonderful to see them again.

Was recently reminded of a Silvia prayer. She was riding a bus and several guys around her were swearing terribly, the most foul-mouthed passengers imaginable. After a while, Silvia prayed that they stop swearing. Suddenly it was quiet a while and one said, “What just happened? Did you feel that?” Others joined in with comments like, “Yes, something is different.” “Are we in Utah?” But the swearing stopped.

Nov 2: Flooding in San Juan County. Several inches of rain here and in CO from whence the San Juan River flows have caused flooding to people at Montezuma Creek and Bluff, and took out a bridge to Mexican Hat not long after Orlo, Kia, and Eva crossed it, coming back from Phoenix. However, Recapture Reservoir was low from 3 years of drought, but the rained filled it in 3 days, it seemed, and raised Lake Powell several feet from its lowest point in years.

APPENDIX A: bro bri sayings and possible T-shirt messages

Time flies whether you're having fun or not.

Parenting and posterity are like pinball: You do your best aim to start and then watch all the bounces entirely out of your control.

Most stay in the box, a few think outside the box, while some of us didn't even know there was a box.

Yes, I've been to Moab … on my way to Blanding

One advantage to growing old: When old, it is easier to keep an eye single to the glory of God, since my own is not worth looking at.

Running used to be the daily endurance test. Now everything is an endurance test.

Slower than a sloth on sleeping pills, I don't do hurry anymore.

The only effective diet is a lifestyle change? Really? But I don't want to be hungry the rest of my life.

I'm getting older and slower and weaker and uglier all at the same time—finally good at multitasking.

Give me no messages! I forget to pass them on and get in trouble.

I'm Old: Put me out to pasture. The Rocky Mountains are my pasture.

I'm too old to die young, so now I can eat what I want, as if that's a change.

Hard times are relative, and our hard times sometimes have a hard time comparing to the hard times of those who really knew hard times, but we can holler as if ours are as bad as any.

I like being alone because when I am alone, everyone present likes me and is nice to me, and no one tells me more things to do, and no one tells me what I am doing wrong of what I am doing.

When I was 20's and saw people turn 50, I thought that was old. Then I turned 50. Then my marriage turned 50. Then my kids started turning 50. Okay, I'm old.

When young, I heard an older man say, "There's a fine line between being warmed up and warn out." Now I understand.

All kids are worth their problems

Life is really nice … when there are no problems and you can do what you want, as brief as those windows are.

Silvia said: "The only thing harder than dealing with old age is at the same time also dealing with someone else who's dealing with old age." I wonder who she is talking about?

We are free to choose, but are not free to avoid the consequences of what we choose.

Of 3 categories of experience, the young seek fun, sweet, happy (1st). Neutral (2nd) is boring to the young, a state to be avoided if possible. But after years of pains and sorrows and disappointments and burdens (the 3rd category), I have come to love neutral, and when it comes, I hope it lasts a whole day before the next burden or sad news arrives.

I was thinking of changing the part in my hair to the other side, but then noticed nothing was left to part.

I can't eat half of what's in a grocery store. That simplifies shopping. I can't do half of what I used to do. That saves time. And I don't want to do half of the other half, and can't afford the other half of the other half. It's nice how age simplifies life.

My definition of old age: When you are lying in a nice soft bed middle of the night when it's pitch black dark and CANNOT sleep, but sitting upright in Church on a hard bench in broad daylight you CAN sleep.

How are you? (my answers): (1) I'm okay last I heard, and will go with that until I hear different. (2) I'm in recovery from being hyperactive the first 70 years of life. (3) (William Hurst's answer): I'm better than when I was not doing so well, but I'm worse than when I was doing better.

When young, I ran, researched, and ate what I wanted. Old now, I walk, read, and eat what science says might postpone the next step … When I care to remember what science says.

Long ago, in my 30s or 40s, I thought up this poem that I regularly recite to Silvia:

Que feo el viejo	How ugly the old man
Que veo en el espejo!	that I see in the mirror.

In my 70s, I began tiring easily and wondered what I might have? I do have mortality, which is terminal, the slow-progressing kind.

On the spectrum between bondage and freedom are degrees of misinformation, which create degrees of bondage, yet the truth makes us free to see more clearly the real choices being made and their consequences. Misinformation against the good keeps many from good (Think: The lies against Joseph Smith, The Book of Mormon, the Church of Jesus Christ). As well, misinformation praising the bad misguides many into it (Think: socialism takes care of us; drugs are fun, they won't hurt you).