

Just Another Man's Opinion¹

The Paseman, Scholtz and Hsu Family stories as I recall them

W.G. Paseman

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This was a favorite saying of my grandfather, Whenever my Dad would come up with some watertight explanation of an observation, Grandpa would say this. It aggravated my Father to no end,. However, as he got older, he said that his father essentially had it right.

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Impetus - 2009

I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhauser gate. All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain.
Roy Batty – "Bladerunner"

I will show you fear in a handful of dust - TS Eliot

My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!
- Shelley

Do not go gentle into that good night. Rage, rage against the dying of the light.
- Dylan Thomas

My Dad died a few weeks ago. It was important to him that memory of his life, his stories and his history be heard and recited by someone. I suspect this was not fear of death, but fear that no one would notice his absence. Personally, I don't understand this. I am more in tune with Ecclesiastes, which claims that people and everything they do is fleeting, and in tune with my mother, who said that ultimately your only shot at immortality are your children.

Mom's Point of View came through to me when I heard Katherine's "Diamond in the Rough" project. Katherine's perception of my stubbornness is the one thing I carry around daily from my Fathers' Fathers' Father, who was burned out of Hamburg, burned out of Canada, and finally settled in Michigan, starting an Apple Orchard at age 55 that everyone knew he would never pay off, but finally did. I know little about him, and nothing of his forefathers, but I carry that legacy of "stubbornness" with me every day.

There are other characteristics I hope to see eventually in my kids (or theirs) such as my mother's analytical ability (which I already see in Katherine) and my father's natural curiosity about everything (which I see in Sabrina). I value this second trait especially as I get older and recognize how it kept my Dad engaged with the world. Of course my kids have new traits as well, such as Raymond's patience (I have no clue where that comes from).

So, in the event my kids (or theirs) want to know a little about their ancestors' life and times, I offer up this piece.

Ultimately, this work and its successors will be lost like "tears in the rain" but many of my ancestors were immigrants, so "Did Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night". Neither should the reader. As I once told a despairing child "You paid for the ticket. You might as well go on the rides.". May you ride your own rides and add your own stories to this list.

Paseman Forefathers

Dad (Richard) always had plenty of stories. From him, I learned to look for surprises and humor in everyday events. Some of his favorite stories were when his father (Wilhelm) and grandfather (Ernst) were at odds with each other.

Ernst, Wilhelm and Richard playing Pinocle

As part of the back story, it useful to know that one trait shared by Richard and Wilhelm were incredible skill at cards. Both could remember exact hands that had been played, and, at times, could recite to you what you were holding in a Pinocle or Gin Rummy hand before you played it. The paid for this talent in terms of the hands they were dealt. I played my father Pinocle for years, and he had more hands dealt to him with five 9's than any one else I ever played. Of course, this was great for me. Whenever I had enough of him, I'd suggest we play Pinocle. I was not a good card player but could count on his luck to get a good hand. Few things in life equaled the deep satisfaction I got from playing a superior player, and winning, with him knowing that I was an inferior card player. Richard and Wilhelm apparently inherited their luck from Ernst. Ernst however, had found a solution to this genetic predisposition to losing at cards. He cheated. Once to pass the time, Ernst pulled out some Pinocle cards plus some matchsticks to bid with. The cards were so dirty they had to dip them in flour in order to keep them from sticking together. So there they sat, in my Great Grandfathers trailer in his Apple Orchard, playing cards by the light of the turpentine lamp. Midway through the game, Wilhelm announced "If you play that god damn ace of spades one more time, I'll tear up the whole deck.". So, Ernst knew what the wining card in the deck was (each deck had two) and depended on these guys to be unaware that he would replay one of them every couple of hands. Dad's (Richard's) reaction was interesting. He would recite the story and say "I just couldn't understand what Dad's (Wilhelm's) problem was. They were Grandpa's (Ernst's) cards, his matchsticks. We weren't playing for money, so what was the big deal?"

Ernst, Wilhelm and Richard picking Apples

Another story, which illustrated quite well the Paseman Father-Son relationship, had to do with picking apples. Ernst had already picked most of them, but there were a few apples left in the trees. "Come", he announced one morning "We pick Apples". It was cold. It was windy. Most of the Apples were bad. They were hard to get to. After a little while, Wilhelm said "I don't want to do this any more." Ernst insisted and they got into a fight. Finally, Wilhelm bought the apples off of Ernst in order to shut him up and to go back inside. The next morning, Ernst announced "Come. We go pick Apples". Wilhelm was naturally upset. "No" he shouted. "They belong to me. I *paid* for them already.". Ernst's response was, predictably, "Come. We go pick apples.". Another fight, which ended as it had to, with Richard, Wilhelm and Ernst picking the rest of the apples, bringing them into town, selling them and the money going to Ernst. All the while, Wilhelm grumbling "But I *paid* for them". As if it mattered....

Ernst's opinion of Hospitals

My final Ernst story involves his attitude toward hospitals. "You only go to hospital for two reasons: to be born, and to die". When Ernst was 85(?), he was shoeing a horse, and the horse kicked him, knocking him out. The neighbors witnessed this and brought him to the hospital. When he woke up, he asked "Where am I". "The hospital" was the response. He immediately had a heart attack and died. This illustrates at least two points. First is that after seeing my grandmother, mother and father die in hospitals, I think Ernst had the right attitude. Second, as my father said, getting a German to believe something takes one hell of a lot of effort, but once he believes it, he *commits*.

Dad used to delight in telling stories about his father, William. Once, William complained that he had never "spoken back" to his father (Ernst) the way that Richard spoke to him. Richard responded "Maybe you didn't know the language". I never thought it very funny, although I did have a similar story in the next section.

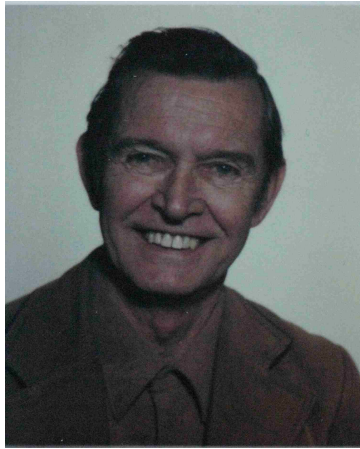
(Alternate) My father's father's father's name was Ernst. He had a livery business in Hamburg and decided to emigrate to Canada after he was burned out twice. He did well in Canada until the anti-German sentiment incited locals to burn out his wheat fields twice during World War I. At age 55, he emigrated to Michigan and bought an Apple Orchard. Locals knew he would never be able to pay it off, but eventually he did. He lived in a trailer and had never been to a hospital. So, apparently he was like most Germans I've gotten to know: stubborn and persistent. One deeply seated view he held was that a man only went to a hospital twice: to be born and to die. One day, while in his 80's, he was shoeing a horse and it kicked him, knocking him unconscious. His neighbors took him to a hospital for an examination. Upon awakening (in fine shape), he asked where he was. They told him "In a hospital" and he died of a heart attack on the spot. That pretty much illustrates my father's perspective on Germans in general. Getting them to change their mind is really hard, but once they believe in something, they really commit.

Hildegard Patzer and the Beer

The story oft told by my father of Hildegard Patzer (my father's mother's maiden name) involved beer. When she was small, her father sent her to get him a pail of beer. To lighten the task, she spun the pail in order to watch the beer stay in via centripetal force. She had to cross a ditch on the way home and she decided to jump it while spinning the pail. She fell and lost all of it. When she told her father, he gave her more money and the same thing happened. He gave her more money still and she repeated the experiment with the same results. Kind of like Ernst's view of hospitals. Once an idea was in her head, you couldn't get it out with dynamite.

The only other story I heard of her was that she had four sisters: Em, Lil, Val and Elma, and one had died during a car crash while she was driving. Dad had great respect for the power of cars. Given how much he loved his mother, I suspect that is one reason why, and one reason why he was so upset with the result of my "Padre Island trip with my cousin Gerhard" (below).

Richard Raymond Paseman (My Dad)



Sandra Perez's Biography of Dad (Richard Paseman)

A few months before Dad died, he mentioned that his next door neighbor Sandra had done a short biography on him for a school project. Dad was pleased she had asked him, and proud she had gotten an "A". I asked her to send her work to me. Here it is.

Subject:Interview **Topic:**Exercise 3

Author:Sandra Perez **Date:**June 28, 2009 9:54 PM

I decided to interview my 83 year old neighbor Richard Paseman . He is a navy veteran, andI chose him because I think he is a very interesting person with many different experiences in life. Mr. Paseman was born on February 28, 1926 in Saginaw Michigan. He later moved to Detroit Michigan and went to elementary school there. He talks about how he remembers moving about five different times whenever the rent was due. In 1940 he graduated from the 8th grade. His family decided to move to Texas in 1940. He was excited he was going to start 9th grade in Edison high school which is now a middle school. He had a conflict with the principal, the principal wanted to place him in the 8th grade again but he said he did not need to take the 8th grade again so he dropped out of school. Mr. Paseman's father told him he needs to work if he is not going to go to school. Mr. Paseman decided to go to trade school for three years. He went to Henry Ford trade school in Michigan. In 1943 he joined the Navy. He made 45 cents per hour. They also gave them bonuses whenever there was a war zone, or when they dropped a bomb around them. He traveled to many different places like South America, The Mediterranean, France, Italy, and North Africa. He said he was very active in The Union, he was a very outspoken guy which lead the FBI to investigate him from 1947-1960 because they thought he was a communist. In 1953 he met a German girl and married her in 1954. He had two sons with her. In 1960 he started his company called American Powerstage Company, they made machines

for window washing, equipment to make bridges, and also made high pressure washers. He was very successful in his business. He got divorced in 1976. So he moved to the house which he still lives in, his father built that house and left it for him. His father bought the land in which the house stands with his war bonds that he used to send his dad. At first he was upset because he thought his father had done a foolish thing, he wanted to buy a car instead of land but Mr. Paseman says it is the best thing that ever happened to him. Mr Paseman is about 83 years old and I have been knowing him all my life since I was a baby. I am thankful that I have him as a neighbor because he has always been good to me and my family and I am going to miss him very much when he is not around.

Dad's (Richard Paseman's) Obituary

In memory of Richard R. Paseman (Dick) born February 28, 1926 in Saginaw Michigan and died on August 11, 2009 in Houston Texas from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. He was 83.

Immediately after graduating from Henry Ford Trade School in June 1944, he joined the Merchant Marine and made his last trip from New York City in June 1950 to come to Houston, Texas.

Dick was a licensed steeple jack in New York and worked for Industrial Painting Contractors in Texas. His work experience gave him a competitive edge when he and John Goss formed the American Powerstage Company in January 1960. They designed and manufactured power driven stages, rigging devices and also the American Water Blaster, all of which were acquired by Weatherford International.

Dick formed the American Powerlance Company in 1979, which had patents on a device to clean the tube side of heat exchangers, and he was proud of the fact that Powerlances were working in 27 foreign countries when he sold the company in 1995.

The Houston Coating Society, Industrial Maintenance Institute and Water Jet Technology Association honored his contributions to the industrial maintenance industry.

Because of his union activities in the 1940's, he was investigated by the F.B.I., but they finally closed his file in 1960.

After retirement at age 70, he was a supporter of Ross Perot and in 1996 was Harris County chairman for the Reform Party.

As an investor, landlord, inventor and small business man, he was always grateful that his parents immigrated to this country. Dick did what he could to improve the country and help his fellow workers.

Preceded in death by his parents, Bill and Hilda Paseman, brother Bill Douglass, ex-wife Waltraud Paseman and a number of good friends, he leaves his sons Bill and Gerhard, grandchildren Raymond, Sabrina, Katherine and Richard, and best friend for 26 years, Jeannine M. Berube.

Dick will be remembered for his great kindness and generosity to his many friends, for the many charities which he supported and for his love of his Siamese cat, Annie Pannie, a companion for over 18 years.

Dick was cremated and his ashes were spread at sea off the coast of Florida. You can remember him by doing "a little bit more" for the organization of your choice.

Special thanks for the love and support of his friends: James Langley, Victor Baham and Robert Sims. Also to Dr. Badu and Nurse Thornton who treated Dick for several years at the V.A. hospital. Also, thanks to the hospice care providers at the V.A. hospital.

Dad's (Richard Paseman's) Memorial

We had a memorial from 11:00 to 1:30 am on Saturday, August 15, 2009 at [Brady's Landing Restaurant](#) (8505 Cypress) to honor Dick. It was a place, as Dad would say, "where the rich people eat". Special thanks to James Langley and Jeannine Berube for suggesting the location. Some of the attendees had not seen each other for 20 or more years. As such, no one even sat down for the first 30 minutes or so, since they were busy getting re-acquainted. The room was overflowing and everyone had an exceptionally good time, reminiscing and recalling stories about him.

Often, when my father would visit someone in the hospital, he would spray paint a beer bottle and put in a flower, so every table had a beer bottle with a rose. Gerhard and I made a (56 megabyte) [Memorial Handout](#) for the occasion. Also, we brought Dad's two cases of H. Ross Perot [books](#) to give to the attendees.

Randy Kruger, who was not able to attend, expressed the same sentiment that John Goss used in his toast: "Dick was a unique individual and a very fine person. He was one of the most honest and honorable men I ever knew. He never was afraid to take a stand on something he believed in."

Transporting Monkeys

Dad was in the Merchant Marines during World War II. During that time he was paid a bonus to take care of some monkeys they were transporting to America. Apparently, Dad spent hours watching them. One thing that especially pissed him off was seeing how the larger monkeys treated the smaller ones. In particular, whenever he fed them, the larger ones would steal all the smaller ones' food. One day Dad decided to administer justice. He brought out an onion, and tossed it in the cage. As luck would have it, that was the one time the small monkey was able to get to the food first. Dad tried talking to the monkey "NO! You stupid little monkey, drop it DROP IT!". But the little monkey would not drop it. Instead he sat in the corner protecting it, taking a bite, his little face screwing up and tearing and, as soon as he could stand it, take another bite... Dad recited that story every now and then. He always found it amazing that the small monkey would do something against his best interest just in order to win a fight. Of course another lesson might be that if you are hungry enough, even an onion tastes sweet....

Intelligence

Dad left school in the eighth grade and went into the Ford Trade School. This was a fine educational path, and worked out well for him. However, he was always sensitive about leaving school, and had a chip on his shoulder about anything related to his intelligence (although, in fact, he was a very smart man). I fell right into that one day when my SAT grades came in. I had done pretty well for that age (730/800 math 680/800 verbal) and my Dad said "I guess you think you could do better than me at this stuff". "Well,yeah!" I responded. Since he equated SATs to intelligence tests, he was REALLY pissed. That smoldered in him for a number of years (I could tell since he brought it up continually), however I finally got him to shut up about it by saying "Dad, if I had known you would be this upset about this, ... I would have brought it up YEARS earlier". He kept quiet for a long time after that until after my son Ray went to high school. Ray did pretty well on his standardized tests as well and Dad said "Bill, you know, Ray is pretty smart. In fact, I think he's smarter than you!". I responded "Dad, every Paseman son is smarter than his father." He laughed. I think that mollified him.

(alternate) My father, who left school after the 8th grade, was defined by many strengths: a phenomenal interest in life and people, an unassailable work ethic, incredible stamina and intelligence.

In my eyes, two weaknesses that defined him were first, to put it mildly, an uneasy relationship with his father and second a defensiveness about his lack of formal education.

My mother and I could never understand this, since he had an active, interested mind and had probing insights on most every topic.

On day I got my SAT test results. I had done pretty well.

Dad asked "I suppose you think you're smarter than me?"

I said something to the effect that since the SAT tested me on subjects he hadn't even taken:

Sure!

Wow. WRONG ANSWER. Dad didn't let go of that answer for years.

Finally, the only way I got him to shut up was to say:

"Dad, if I had known that saying that would have made you so upset, I would have said it YEARS earlier."

He didn't bring it up again for years, so I thought that closed the topic.

But several years after my son was born, Dad spent some time with him.

Dad then came back with this: "You know, I spent a long time talking to Ray. I think he's smart.

In fact, I think he's smarter than you."

My response was "Of course Dad, every Paseman is smarter than his father".

He laughed and never brought the topic up again after that.

The Lawsuit

Dad had a nasty habit of breaking promises to me, and as such we were “estranged” during the late 70’s². However one afternoon at MIT I received a phone call from him. He was pretty unhappy. Apparently a worker had disassembled one of his Powerlances at a job site and had connected the foot control to a Flex-lance in order to clean the tube side of a heat exchanger. In the process, the worker had shoved the flex lance into one foot, turned the water on with the other foot and promptly blew off the foot on the Flex-lance side. The worker could not sue ether Texaco (the plat where the accident occurred) or his employer since he had agreements in place forbidding it, so he got the idea to sue my father since he manufactured the foot control (and had no contract in place with him). My Dad wanted me to testify in Court that I had used my professional engineering acumen to help design the Powerlance so that it was safe. In fact, I had relatively little to do with product development, although I had done some testing. However, I agreed. In particular, I said “Just tell me what you want said, put me in the docket and I’ll say it.” That seemed to settle his stomach. A week passed. A month. Two months. No call. So I called him back. “Hi Dad”. “Hello”. “How are you doing” “Fine” “Everything OK?” “Everything’s fine”. “Dad, what about the suit”? “Suit, what suit? Oh the suit was dropped.” “Why? What happened? Did the guy kill himself?” “Yes.”. “WHAT?” I exploded. “Jesus Dad, I knew you played rough and this was a big deal to you, but offing the guy?” “No, No, No. It was nothing like that.” He explained that the worker liked to play with guns, and one Friday night the worker got a revolver from his nightstand, emptied the shells on his bed (or thought he had, one stayed in the cylinder) and went outside to get in his buddy’s car. The buddy, seeing the gun, asked “Shit, you’re bringing a gun?” The worker said “Don’t worry, its not loaded”, pointed the gun to his own temple, pulled the trigger and got lucky. After hearing this, I said “Well Dad, I’ve been looking for proof of the existence of God my entire life. Now I have seen an irrefutable sign and it is clear to me that you are one of his chosen people.”

Water Blasting

When I was 14, I started helping Dad do his particular style of industrial maintenance work: "water blasting". A water blaster sprays a stream of water that can cut through lumber about as fast as an electric saw. It has a pistol grip and a trigger to control the water flow. Like a "real life" ray gun, anything you point at gets blasted away: rust, paint, asphalt; even fingers and toes if you aren't careful. I enjoyed the physical nature of the work. At 17, I worked for Dad on my best paying job: water blasting coke deposits inside a boiler's pre-heater. We lay on wooden boards placed on top of the heater's metal fins while working inside a 2 foot crawl space. The

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That said, he paid for my entire undergraduate education at a time that money was especially precious. As such there is no getting away from the fact that my father did more for me at a greater cost to himself than any other person I know, with the possible exception of my mother.

fins were so hot, the water would flash into steam as soon as the water hit them. You sweated quite a bit but if you braced yourself properly it was "easy money" and relatively light work (as long as you stayed on the boards). The most dangerous job Dad gave me was water blasting asphalt off a concrete slab. I stood on the slab, held the lance with my shoulder and pointed it near my feet, moving it back and forth, back and forth 8 hours a day. Back and forth, back and forth 6 days a week. Back and forth, back and forth until the job was done. The monotony was tough for me to handle. I had trouble paying attention through an entire shift and I was lucky to leave the job without blowing any toes off. Dad could pay attention for the entire shift. It is humbling to discover your co-workers (and especially your father) can do stuff you can't, but it drove home why the only feedback he ever gave me was to "pay attention" and "do your best". "Paying attention" meant you survived the day. "Doing your best" meant you (usually) had a job tomorrow. Dad always did both. It allowed him to climb towers that no one else would climb and to survive the early days of the industry, when sandblasting was done on the tops of towers and bridges without a mask, without goggles and without a safety harness.

Afterward

I had a tough time with my Dad off and on. He once screwed me on a business deal, (although he thought it was in my best interest), left my mother, liked my brother better, etc. However, from another angle, here was a man who never got past the 8th grade and then saved his money his whole working life to send Gerhard and me through college so that we would have a better life. That was a lot of money for him, and for a man who valued money a lot, a very, very big deal. Again, objectively, no one has done more in their life to help me more than my father, mother and of course, Marguerite. So, it is that sacrifice I remember first about him.

Waltraud Hildegard Margot Scholtz Paseman (My Mom)



Das Land dass meine Mutter verliess war ein Land in den sie geglaubt hatte,
Und das bis zu ihre letzte Sekunde zu Leben liessen.
Ein Land dass es im Wirklichkeit nie so gegeben hat.
Ein Land dass in meine Erinnerung immer mit meine Mutter verbunden sein wird.

The country my mother left behind was a country she believed in.
And until her last breath.
A country that in fact never existed.
A country that, in my memory, I will always associate with my mother.

“Goodby Lenin”

Waltraud Paseman's Obituary

Waltraud (Margaret) Paseman died on the morning of May 14, 2007, at age 77, after a long struggle with lung disease. She is survived by her two sons William, 52 and Gerhard, 43, their father Richard, her brothers Wolfgang, Eberhard, Hellmut and Dicki and her sisters Margot and Mechthild.

Waltraud was born in Stahnsdorf, Germany on November 21, 1929, in her grandfather's house. She was the eldest of seven children, and as a young girl spent much time looking after them. She attended Lyceum and graduated with an Abitur, and later trained as a business correspondent in both German and English.

In November 1952, she came to the United States and spent time doing clerical work for a Houston company. She took the name Margaret at this time to make the transition to America easier. After marrying Richard Paseman, a son William was born in 1954, and another son Gerhard in 1963. While raising her sons, she spent time doing translation work as part of her duties at Fondren Library in Houston. She also became a realtor, did tax preparation, worked in a pizza parlor and managed her own investments.

Waltraud spent time writing, drawing and practicing piano. She was a member of the Houston Saengerbund, and frequented the opera, ballet, symphony, and theater. She also hosted Great Books discussion sessions and spent time in various church activities.

She fought many battles in her time, the last one with lung disease. She survived a lung cancer operation in 1995, was a diabetic and managed her health primarily through power of will. She passed away the morning after Mother's Day.

Contributions to Habitat for Humanity made in her memory are most welcome.

Picture of Christmas before WWII.

TBD

During WWII: "Waltraud - eine kurze Geschichte der Zeit"

Mom was assigned to write her own autobiography when she was (about?) 14. A scanned copy is in the companion document "Waltraud - eine kurze Geschichte der Zeit".

After WWII

Mom was a member of the Hitler Youth (A government requirement at the time). Besides her beauty, she was remarkable in her strength of character, idealism and analytical capability. When young, she was a great believer in the Socialist ideal, the nobility of work, the equality of man, and all that stuff. My uncles tell me that as a teenager, she defended the government against charges of secret prisons, political persecution and all else they were accused of. I think it was the revelations after the war coupled with her idealism that finally broke her. She believed that each individual was responsible for changing the state of the world, and by extension probably felt responsibility for having backed the wrong horse. A lot of weight for a 14 year old girl to carry. So in her early 20's, she left her homeland to visit relatives in America (some say to follow a boyfriend) and build a new life. She met my father and was impressed by his work ethic and political views. She married him and after enduring the difficulties of war, taking care of 6 brothers and sisters, and making her way to America, she had only one focus: me.

Some children view parents as perfect, but even when I was young, I could tell parenting was difficult for her. However she kept at it, and that probably impressed me more than perfection ever could have.

Vietnam War

Mom was involved in the anti-Vietnam War effort. Getting petitions signed, attending meetings. The whole bit. At the time, 18 year olds were drafted via a lottery system. At the beginning of the year, each was issued a number between 1 and 365 based on their birthday. You were then called up in order. Number 1 was called first, 2 second and so on. My number was 7. Wow, I had never won anything before. But frankly, I was ambivalent about the whole thing. I wasn't going to volunteer, but if my number came up, I would go.

My mom identified with the German region called "Prussia". She was stoic and never broke emotionally. Except once. I asked her, "Why is this Vietnam thing such a big deal to

you"? She said, voice cracking "Because I'm afraid you're going to die". Wow. That really touched me.

Working the System

Mom's intellect was razor sharp, and she was quite well read. One of the first things she bought after she married Dad was a Compton's encyclopedia set at a grocery store. Since they had little money at the time, she read the encyclopedia for recreation. In Bellaire, she organized a local "Great Books" group for a while, and all this gave her a broad and deep knowledge of a lot of topics. However, like my father, a lot of Mom's arguments were abstract. Mom did this because she lived a lot in her head. Dad did it because of his admiration for arguments based on sweeping generalizations. As such, although their hearts were in the right place, they would take a minority view in a lot of arguments and so were seldom victorious. Mom did, however, have an appreciation of those who could work the system. She told me a story of how homes in Bellaire continually needed implementation of a Flood control project. For years, activists would go to the Board of review, insisting that the project be implemented based on the needs of the people. However, one day, a guy showed up to the hearing with one question "I checked the records and see that funds were actually allocated for this project 3 years ago. What happened to the money?" The project was approved the next week. Nothing like subtle accusations of criminal financial mis-management to grease the wheels of social progress.

I invoked that experience recently in getting the "Paseman Family Cookbook" printed. I entered the cookbook on a "Better Homes and Gardens" website and after a while, was unable to generate a document from the entered data (The site generate Internal Errors when the print function was invoked). I called the organization, sent email to the site's webmaster, called the webmaster repeatedly and left the webmaster voice mail messages over a period of several months. Finally, the solution to the problem became clear. I left the message below on an investor website (Meredith owns BHG and "shorting" means taking a bet that the stock will go down). Less than 24 hours later, the site worked. I think Mom would have smiled.

Meredith Corporation (MDP) - Quote Info

Search : in **Meredith Corporation (MDF**

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Shorting opportunity? < 16-Nov-10 03:53 pm >

My wife has said that web services on some Meredith properties are broken, the webmaster email address is non responsive and no one calls back when messages are left. Generally, when someone hollows out their organization (cutting back on basic service, staffing and maintenance), it indicates deeper financial issues. Any other indicators that anyone has noticed?

shortingopp...

[View Messages](#)
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Sentiment : Strong Sell

Rating : ★★★★★ (No ratings) **Rate it:** ☆☆☆☆☆

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Meredith

Religion

Raised Catholic, Mom brought me to a Priest to baptize. She told me that she had talked to the priest about evil in the world, had looked for comfort, and since the priest gave none, she did not baptize me and withdrew from the Catholic Church. I was then trundled every Sunday through a series of successively “God Optional” Protestant churches: Methodist, Unitarian, Congregationalist, etc. This is why I was fine with raising my kids Catholic. I figured that they would either take comfort from the church, or reject it totally. If they rejected it, at least they’d have a fixed target for rejection. I never had that. However, I suspect that I currently live in a Godless society, where godlessness is not defined as acceptance or rejection, but rather total apathy. I did not expect that.

Having gone through the war in Germany, as well as having been exposed to prejudice in both the North and South USA, she developed a cynicism born of hard experience. One of my

greatest regrets was that I could never convince her that the world was not as dark as she continually imagined. The key reason I was unsuccessful in this was that I had no moral authority at all with regards to her. She told stories of starving in Germany, being strafed by US fighter planes, being bombed out and countless tails of financial mis-management and ruin. Once I made some money during the internet boom in California, she mollified somewhat. But she was the subject of a home invasion where the perpetrator bound her on the bed while he rifled the house. She was sure that she was going to be killed and at that moment, she began to recite Catholic prayers from her youth. (In stress, one tends to revert to type. I guess she was a theist after all.) The enraged man struck her and left. I sometimes wonder what would have happened if she had framed the plea for her life in terms of secular humanism. I suspect she would have gotten a lesser result.

Scholtz Siblings

Below are some of my Mom's stories about her 6 siblings,

1. Waltraud – Born 1929
2. Wolfgang
3. Eberhard
4. Hellmut
5. Dickie
6. Margot
7. Mechthild – Born 1948

Wolfgang's Milk

Mother had several stories about Wolfgang. Most involved her rescuing him from angry older kids. My favorite story concerned milk. Wolfgang came to school and only had 5 Groschen to buy milk. Unfortunately, milk cost 10 Groschen. So Wolfgang made a 5 Groschen bet with a boy that he could drink the boy's carton of milk in 5 seconds. The boy took the bet and handed Wolfgang the carton. It took Wolfgang 10 seconds to drink the milk, and when he finished, he handed the boy the 5 Groschen. When the boy realized that he had just sold Wolfgang a 10 Groschen carton of milk for 5 Groschen, he became quite angry. However, Wolfgang was quite satisfied with the exchange.

Many of Mom's stories dated from World War II. Here is a selection:

Phosphorus Bomb

My mother said that a common practice during the bombings was to put pails of water around the house in order to stop fires. She said that they once came home and found a phosphorus bomb in a pail of water in the Basement.

Christmas Candles

Apparently candles were severely rationed during the war, and the family missed them especially at Christmas. One of the boys found some wax in the forest and brought it home. The women were pleased and were about to melt the wax into candles when a next door neighbor happened by. He recognized the "wax" as TNT, and suggested that they not put it over an open flame, as that would blow everyone up.

Three Brothers

Mother told this story often. Her [unedited version](#) is below. After the war, Oma Margot felt it was time to teach her oldest sons about Money, and so gave each RM 2. She also said that at the end of the month, she would ask what they had done with the money. So, the month went by and at the end, She asked the question. One son had used the money to buy electronic parts and had built a radio. Another had used the money to make a down payment on some tin soldiers

and go into debt. However Hellmut, all of about 8 years old, pulled out a wad of RM 300 from his pocket. Margot was astonished and asked how he got it. It turned out that he started with batteries. He had 1 "D" cell battery. But like today, most electronic devices needed two "D" batteries. So he had traded some of his money for another battery, and then had sold the two together for a profit. He then moved from ration cards to black market pens, and then to watches.

Three Brothers: Mom's version:

I found this in Mom's notes after she died.

It was in those times when a loaf of bread cost 70 marks or more and a carton of cigarettes brought 2000 marks. As a matter of fact cigarettes were almost the currency of postwar Germany. Blackmarket deals were flourishing everywhere and every child of school age knew the current exchange of any kind of produce in actual currency or cigarettes. Some people showed a remarkable aptitude at these dealings and amassed small fortunes, but those were the hardboiled blackmarketeers and were severely persecuted by the police. In a smaller way all of us were blackmarketeers including the policemen. The ration books simply weren't enough to provide at least a meager living so everybody tried to sell something on the black market to add a loaf of bread or potatoes to their rations.

Ready made products were impossible to buy due to destroyed factories and lack of raw material. My family tried to make ends meet like everybody else. One day my mother decided to allow each of my brothers to have 2 marks as their pocket money under on condition that they would tell her at the end of one month what each had done with it. I don't know what she tried to do and what her intention was. 2 marks in those times were comparable to nothing as there was nothing you could buy with them. That is most people would have thought so including myself. Not so my brothers they were very happy about this noble gift and promised they would give my mother exact account of what they used it for.

The oldest one was fourteen and very interested in radios. My family was so poor at the time that, even there would have been radios on the market, we couldn't have afforded one.

My second brother was twelve and a very happy go lucky fellow with lots of charm and very witty. He loved to play with toy soldiers and collected them eagerly.

My third brother was only eight and just roamed around exploring things as boys of that age will often do.

Nobody can imagine all the activity that these 2 marks per brother brought forth.

The first sign of it were a whole army of lead soldiers perfect in every detail which were displayed on the dining room table and big battles were fought. We were all a little disgusted to be reminded of it. Especially as we were still suffering from its aftermath.

My oldest brother was terribly busy with films for cameras which he was lucky enough to get somewhere also hunted all over town for radio parts. I didn't see any connection in this. My smallest brother was as quiet as usual and nobody paid too much attention to him.

After the month was over my mother asked all of my three brothers whether they remembered their promise and here are the results.

My oldest brother had to show a radio which he had built from old parts and which was

in good working condition.

My second brother had an army of lead soldiers plus 20 marks in debt.

And my third brother had multiplied his 2 marks into 300 marks.

Hellmut's Flower Business

Hellmut also made money by going to refugee camps, cutting the flowers that grew in front of them, arranging them in bouquets and then selling them inside the camps. According to his brothers, these flowers were being tended and grown by the refugees themselves, and so Hellmut was selling them what they already owned. However Hellmut said that the customers knew what was going on, were charmed by a little boy that was trying to make some money, and explained to him some of the intricacies involved in commerce.

Hellmut and the Black Market

According to my mother, there are two interesting follow-ons to this story. First, apparently his father Gerhard took Hellmut aside and asked Hellmut exactly how he managed his trading. Hellmut explained and then Grandpa Gerhard used his knowledge of books to buy them in bulk from second-hand book dealers, then re-selling the valuable ones on the open market. So apparently Hellmut's knowledge indirectly helped put food on the table. Also, Hellmut aged 10 years was tempted by the profits in the black market and he soon was well known in the "community". So he also got some high praise from the refugees mentioned above who were preparing their emigration to Israel. "Du wirst bestimmt mal ein guter Jud" they said. Always fascinated by finance, Hellmut later was responsible for research and planning on long term financing of retirement assets. He applied this at his job with the German Social Security Administration and later wrote a book on [portfolio management](#).

Eberhard in Czechoslovakia

Mom viewed Eberhard as an adventurer. Apparently he traveled to Italy with Hellmut when they were young, and was quite the charmer. However the story my mother told most often was when Oma and Opa decided to split the children up during the war. Eberhard was in Czechoslovakia near the end of the war, and the Czechs were killing any Germans they could find. However, a Czech Doctor managed to smuggle Eberhard on a train out of the country. Sometimes, the help of a stranger makes all the difference.

Eberhard spewing Milk

TBD

Eating Deer

After the war, when food of any kind was difficult to get, Mom's Grandfather brought over the dressed carcass of a deer that he had gotten in the woods. While they were eating, Mom recounted to him that things were getting so difficult that some people were resorting to eating Dog meat. She said that grandpa gave her a strange smile at the point, which, years later, she interpreted as meaning that perhaps the meat was not deer at all.

Gerhard (Dickie) and Sibylle

According to my mother, Dickie has always loved Sibylle. However in the early days, their relationship suffered the usual ups and downs of “young love”. Once, they got into a tiff and “broke up for good”. Dickie went out to “lubricate his sorrows” and then drove home. On the way, he had a car crash and went through the windshield. (Fortunately the visor protected his face). He was brought into the emergency room from the accident to Sibylle, who was an on-duty nurse at the time. Long Story short, they stayed together after that.

Dickie on the Border

Dickie entered the Berlin police department and has many stories to tell about that time, including a confrontation over cigarettes with East German Border Guards. The confrontation ended with Dickie covering his partner from inside an air vent with a drawn and cocked machine gun. Fortunately, nothing happened.

Dickie and the World Cup

However my favorite story was when he was in charge of security at a world cup tournament. He had little budget and knew at the time that most trouble at the tournament came from a small group of individuals. So he bought tickets for Asians who attended the local Martial Arts school and placed them in a circle around the troublemakers. When the troublemakers starting making trouble, the little Asians made short work of them. This is the kind of thinking that I have come to expect from my Uncles.

Gerhard Raymond Paseman (My Brother)



IMG_3756.JPG

Gerhard and I never did spend a lot of time together, however after Mom died, we both went to Texas to pick up her stuff and drive it back to California. Our Road trip took us through Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada and as shown here, the Grand Canyon.

Early Life

Giving birth was difficult for my mother, and she lost several children before giving birth to my brother Gerhard when I was 9. Gerhard taught himself to read around the age of 3 by associating pictures in newspaper ads with the wording there (e.g. ads for apples and bananas). Mom would recite how excited he was when he discovered the association between the pictures and the words. You couldn't stop him after that. One of his favorite books was a collection of comic books from Peanuts. He would read it along with a Time/Life book on mathematics while listening to Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik on the Record Player. Mom theorized that Gerhard thought Mozart was actually Beethoven and was trying to imitate Schroeder, the piano playing character from Peanuts.

Blocks and Baloney Hearts

As an infant, Gerhard was fascinated by series of objects. He would line up all his blocks in a single row from one end of the house to the other. He would then push one end and watch how the last block at the other end moved. He clearly thought that was great, and doubtless it was given he was reading algebra books before he was 10. He was not a fan of diapers,

discarding them whenever they got full. Once Mom came home and he had taken a package of Baloney, used a cookie cutter to make Baloney hearts out of them and pasted them to the outside wall of the house in a long row. Mom would still talk of how she returned home seeing baloney hearts peeling off the side of the house and heart shaped grease spots that they left behind.

Love

My parents were delighted to have such a gifted child, and spent a lot of time and trouble with him. Not being gifted, Dad made sure I knew how to work. He would take me to jobs early (He would get up at 4:00 or 5:00 am) and bring me along as a helper so I could see what different kinds of work were like. This included stints in chemical plants to do painting, water blasting and sand blasting. I suspect it was exposure to carcinogens on one of these jobs that would later give me kidney cancer. Oh Well, at least Dad's motives was good.

Since Gerhard was special, he did not go through the same regimen. He was driven to "gifted" schools while I hitchhiked to wherever I could bluff my way in. My attitude would occasionally get me in trouble at school and Dad would invariably side with the school official against me.

I pointed out to my parents that not grounding Gerhard in the real world would cause problems. They assumed my comments came out of jealousy, so my advice was ignored. However I still stand by the claim.

Dad would always say that the reason he was tough on me was because he loved me. I never said it out loud, but I often wished that he had loved Gerhard a little more and me a little less.

Mowing the Lawn

Perhaps the anecdote that best illustrates the difference between Gerhard and I is mowing the lawn. Invariably, the grass grows, someone needs to cut it and the parent assigns the task to the oldest child. When I was oldest, the conversation would go: "The grass needs to be cut". "I'm busy". "It still needs to be cut". "I have homework". "Then cut it after homework". "I'm visiting friends then". "Cut it before you go". And on and on. Ultimately Mom would win and I'd cut the grass.

With Gerhard, the conversation would go: "The grass needs to be cut". "You're right". "Cut it now". "OK". 3 hours later. "You haven't cut the grass yet". "That's True". "Cut it now". "OK". And on and on.

JETS

As a young man, Gerhard was very competitive, he would compete in Number Sense and Math and Chemistry tournaments and do quite well. And one goal he had was to beat the heck out of me. The problem was I was 9 years older, 7 inches taller and 50 pounds heavier and never got into the school competition scene. However, there was one contest in my high school career that I did compete in: JETS – the Junior Engineering Technological Society. It was a group our chemistry teacher had signed us up for. The idea was that all JETS chapters would compete in a state-wide competition. We had three members at Bellaire: Gerry Busch, David Goldberg and me.

We did not study for the competition and on the day it was held, we got up early, drove to College Station (where it was held) from Houston (where we lived) took the tests. At awards time, we sat in the back of the auditorium making snide comments and getting hostile stares from our nicely dressed competitors. David Goldberg won 1st in Chemistry and 3rd in Biology. I took 3rd in Chemistry. I still remember how the back of one girl in a pink dress got stiffer and stiffer as we walked down the stairs to take each award.

So. Gerhard joined JETS as well. The day came and he took the tests. He placed 3rd. In Chemistry.

Daisy, Berkeley, Calico, Donna, \$50K, rebuff

Marguerite Hsu Paseman (My Wife)

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.
- Howard Arnold Walter,

ForeMothers

See separate documents:

[gma_V10.pdf](#)

[Florence Paktsun Diary.pdf](#)

My mom says the biggest unit we stayed in Hk for 10 people was 20x17' including a 6x6 kitchen, plus a 17x3' balcony with a 3x3 bathroom. After my siblings went abroad to study, moved to an even smaller unit for 7 people, soon after that Chris and Maryanne left, so there was only my nanny, mom, Ronald and I plus my dad when he comes home in a 7-people unit.

Shuffling on the carpet
Casino Chips from around the world
Asking if I am all right

Marguerite is an engineer. I can show her my work and explain my daily triumphs and defeats and not only is she sympathetic, but can understand the issues and make suggestions. And she is always happy. I'd often say that I would come home some day after a major earthquake, house destroyed, people killed and she would greet me with "But the good news is...".

After we got married, and I had bought her a house and we had our first child, she said "Well, I've got everything I want, what do you want?". I had raised \$18M for my last company, and it had completely failed, but I wanted to start again (slower) without VC financing. So I did the consulting and development she did the back room work and testing, with our two little guys crawling around our machines. I had been working on the company for a year, and had tried to sell my initial product about 10 times during its course, failing each time. I had another demo scheduled after Christmas and I completely mis-managed my time. I told her that since I had nothing, I wanted to cancel. She said something to the effect "These opportunities come along so seldom for you, why not just go and try?" A more blunt appraisal would have been "You can't sell for shit. It's a F**king miracle you even got an appointment. Try not to blow it this time". Others would have phrased it that way, but never my wife. So I coded up a 1/2 demo on the airplane from San Jose to Boston, my wife coded up the other half, which I downloaded when I got there; I drove 2 hours to New Hampshire and with 3 hours sleep under my belt went in to a one hour meeting with a ten minute demo. I filled the other 50 minutes showing the demos that

hadn't sold before. I've given lots of business presentations in my career, and that was easily the worst by a wide margin. At the end, my sponsor said "Well Bill, we understand the product, but you should really hire a salesman". Indeed. However I figured a way back in and eventually closed our first \$250K deal. Sometimes surviving is enough.

So, that's my wife. After our company's initial success, she retired and cared for our three kids.

William Gerhard Paseman (Me)

My parents set up house when I was seven in “Meyerland”, a Jewish enclave in Houston. Thirteen years after the end of WWII, the neighbors were just de-lighted to have a German move in. I wasn't quite sure what a Nazi was, but various kids up and down the block made it clear to me that Exodus 34:6-7³ entitled them to give me a beating every few days. On the bright side, it allowed me to pre-compile arguments that served me well in later life. For example, once at Daisy in the mid 1980's, an Israeli, hearing I was of German extraction, asked what I thought about prison camps. My response was “Those of 40 years ago or the ones you are keeping the Palastinians in now?”. That shut him up (Doesn't work on 9 year old boys though).

Daisy

Fortunately at Daisy, as in Houston, I had supporters as well. Daisy was founded by several Israelis and one American. After my initial interview, the American said that he did not want to hire me because I was loud, overconfident and obnoxious. The Israelis countered that I was smart, hard working and had backbone⁴. Adding all the attributes together, I'd fit in real well at a company with a lot of Israelis. That company made me my first fortune, and I wouldn't have made it in without the kindness of (Israeli) strangers. That experience reaffirmed something I had learned years before, that two different individuals with the same background can either hate or love you; and that is a reflection of them as individuals, not their group, not you. Pity though. Prejudice can be such a time saver.

Mother's Day

Mom had several stories she would recite about me. Perhaps my favorite was when my Dad took me to the store to get my Mom her first Mother's day present. I must have been 4 or 5. To give a little background, at the time many stores gave out “trading stamps” for every purchase. Like “bonus miles” or “loyalty points”, they were incentives for shoppers to frequent the same store, since they could be pasted into books and the books exchanged for gifts in a catalog. To make a long story short, I bought toy soldiers and gave Mom the associated trading stamps as a mother's day present. Dad was furious, but Mom was quite amused. She said that when she told the story to one of her friends, the response was “Billy will go far”.

Texas Avenue Adventures

Mom's favorite stories came from when I started to walk. We lived in Houston on the second floor of a one bedroom duplex on Texas Avenue off of Harrisburg. Once she awoke to hear me dragging something over the floor. When she went to the living room, she found all small objects were gone, thrown over the edge of the balcony to the sidewalk below. One thing

³ “He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations”

⁴ they really liked MIT grads. So my decision to go to MIT made a big difference there.

survived, a painted pitcher which now sits in my music room (it now holds various wood recorders that my mom used to play). The spout had broken off, but Mom reglued it.

Another time my mom was awakened by the phone. When she got out of bed, she was ankle deep in water. The neighbor below was complaining that water was coming out of the light sockets. I had gone to the kitchen, stuffed up the sink drain, and turned the water on full so that I could flood the living room to float my boats. Mom said the stairwell was "like a little waterfall".

Another story involved the time I came in from the outside, soaking wet. Mom, Dad and Grandpa Paseman were there and Mom asked what I had been up too. "Playing Gas Station!" I said. Mom did not realize the full meaning of this, but Dad and Grandpa did. They raced outside to find I had taken a garden hose and filled all the car gas tanks with water.

Holly Adventures

TBD

Padre Island trip with my cousin Gerhard

Car crash and scar



Sandra Kurtzig

In 1995, when I put together Calico, I had an opportunity to talk with Sandra Kurtzig, founder of ASK Corporation. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ASK_Corporation

I told her that if she would go on my board of directors, then my greatest wish would come true. So she told me the following story:

"A man found a bottle on a beach. He rubbed it and a Genie popped out offering to grant him one wish.

The man thought a moment and said 'I'd like to have one blowout party with some unforgettable women.'

So BOOM, there he is with Tonya Harding, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonya_harding

Lorena Bobbitt http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lorena_Bobbitt

and Hilarie Clinton. So they have a wild time, swinging from the chandeliers and all the rest.

The next morning the man wakes up with no kneecaps, no penis and no healthcare...."

Sandra then turned to me and said "So the moral is.. Be careful what you wish for".

The Sandra Kurtzig pricing method

Sandra was famous for how she determined the "fair" price of her software: She would The software costs \$10,000 (then if they don't blink) per module (then if they don't blink) per month (then if they don't blink) initially.

Calico's IPO

Calico's early days are in a Separate Document: "CalicoLore". One day of note was when Calico went public. The stock closed at \$44, making my stake worth \$150 million or so. I called my Mom up. When I was little, I used to like to watch TV, however she would strickly control my time in front of the screen, insisting that I go outside to play instead. When I told her the closing price and my net worth, I asked "Can I go inside and watch TV NOW?". She said "yes". I guess you can get a German to change their mind temporarily. Dad was totally baffled about how I managed to pull this off. Being a pretty good salesman himself, he always implied that I would never be able to selll anything because I was just too unlikeable. His theory was that it was all due to Marguerite. And if he had married someone like her, he would have done as well too. I rather liked that assessment, which managed to piss off 3 people at once: me, Marguerite and Mom.

Paseman Family Cookbook

See Separate Document: "Paseman Family Cookbook".

My Children

15841 Siesta Vista Drive was the kid's first destination rom the hospital. A lot of their early stories occurred there.

Backyard Steps

Raymond Gerhard Paseman (My Son)

Marguerite always insisted on taking pictures of everything. In fact, I often said that when a man marries a Chinese woman, in her eyes he changes from a lover to a tripod. Ray was her first subject and she showered attention on him incessantly.

Waiting for Marguerite

When Ray was little he looked out of windows a lot. Mom noticed that when Marguerite would leave for work, Ray would watch her go from the kitchen window, waiting patiently for her to return.

Birds

He would often sit in his room and watch the pigeons raised by our next door neighbor circle above our backyard. When I took him outside to see them up close, I saw him point and say his first word: "birds".

Sprinkler Heads

He would also watch the sprinklers turn on from our back window. As soon as he was allowed to go outside, he would go straight to the sprinklers and twist the sprinkler heads back and forth. I did not have the heart to make him leave them alone, so I made a special toy just for him. I took a 4 way threaded PVC connector, attached a nipple plus a hose fitting to one arm and a valve, elbow and sprinkler head to each of the other three. I then put Ray and his toy in his plastic wash tub in the backyard, hooked it up and turned the water on low. Ray would gasp when the cold water hit him, but he did not cry out. He would then sit there for a pretty long time, twisting the heads back and forth as the water sprayed him.

Disneyland

Ray was always a solemn little fellow. However, he responded to me when I was animated. When we took him to Disneyland for the first time (his third birthday, the one where I gave him his penguin), I still remember the ride from the parking lot to the entrance. Marguerite had dressed him up in a little suit and cap that his aunt Mary Ann had made for him. I got all animated, telling him what we would see. He was actually straining forward in anticipation, his little mouth open in excitement. The day went well, however he was never as excited during the day as he had been when anticipating what lay ahead. That taught me a lot.

Washing Mats

He taught me another lesson when he was 3 and we were downstairs by the stable. We were washing off the rubber mats that we kept inside. I had Ray hold the hose while I scrubbed with a broom. It was pretty much as good as it gets. A father working with his son at the house. We were both having a pretty good time. However he was only 3, and his mind would wander, as

would the hose. I moved his hand to direct the flow back to the mats several times, but he kept wandering. Finally I shouted "Hey Ray! Put the water on the mats". His little head drooped and he dropped the hose and did not want to play anymore. I felt about 3 inches tall.

Jiffy's Food

He has always had a sense of right and wrong. Once, in the old house, we went downstairs to the stable to visit jiffy, our cat. Sabrina squatted down beside Jiffy's dish of cat food and started eating from the bowl. I immediately said "Sabrina, stop that!". Ray was briefly puxxled but then chimed in "Yeah Sabrina, that's Jiffy's food!"

Personalities

Mom visited us occasionally and it bothered her that Ray said so little. However after he visited her in Houston for a week, she came back to me with a report "There's something in there". Marguerite worked hard with each of the kids to identify their interests and see to it that they had projects to develop them. That worked with the girls but not so much with Ray. As such, between his general quietness and loathing of working on stuff with me, I did not spend as much time with him as with the girls. Oh well.

Ray's help during Surgery

He did come and help me for a few days when I was in the hospital in March 2015 however. Here is the email he sent reporting on my progress.

Mon, Mar 24, 2014 at 6:48 PM
Dear Daughters,

This is Raymond typing. Dad asked me to be nice to you, so question everything that follows.

Surgery was at 12:50. One of Dad's farts caught fire, which set off the fire alarm, but other than that, everything went smoothly. Mom talked to Dr. Meng, and he showed us a picture of Dad's kidney; special chinese dim sum when you come back.

Kidding aside, the operation went about as well as it could. I hope you guys are successful in your respective world hemispheres, and I look forward to seeing each of you when you get back.

Love,
Dad

PS. I lost 5 pounds today.

Sabrina Katherine Paseman (My Oldest Daughter)

Cutting a hole in her skirt
Playing with Barbies while doing a full split
Strong Back
Climbing
Gymnastics
Diving
Ferrometer
<http://paseman.com/personal/Random.doc>

Katherine Casey Paseman (My Youngest Daughter)

Laughing at the Table

Playing with Pullies

DI

Island of Lost Cartoon Characters

Hemometer

<http://paseman.com/personal/ADiamondInTheRough-katherine.mp3>

Appendix: Bill's Favorite Jokes

Joke: Best patient

Three doctors were arguing about who the best patient was.

Doctor 1 said an Engineer from Tulane. All his parts are numbered.

Doctor 2 said an Engineer from Rice. All his parts are numbered AND color-coded.

Doctor 3 said an Engineer from A&M. He only has two moving parts: his mouth and his asshole; and they're interchangeable.

Joke: Oklahoma

When an Aggie crosses the Border into Oklahoma, the average IQ goes up in both states.

Joke: Rooster Fight.

How can you tell there's a Polack at a rooster fight?

He brings the duck.

How can you tell the Italian is at the rooster fight?

He bets on the duck.

How can you tell the mafia is at a rooster fight?

The duck wins.

Joke: Three Morals

Once, a bird was flying south in the late fall. Alas, the weather turned and the bird started to freeze to death and fell to the ground. While lying there, knowing he would die, and wishing for another chance at life, a cow came and defecated on him. The final indignity. But the manure was warm and the bird warmed up and realized that he would have his second chance. He was so happy that he poked his head out of the pile and began to sing. A cat passing by heard the singing, pulled the bird out and ate him. This story has three morals:

- 1) Not everyone who shits on you is your enemy.
- 2) Not everyone who pulls you out of shit is your friend.
- 3) If you're sitting in shit and happy about it, don't sing.

Joke: Texan at Harvard

A Texan was visiting Harvard and stopped a man on Campus.

"Excuse me sir, could you please tell me where the library's at?"

The man coolly replied "Sir, at Harvard, we do not end our sentences with prepositions."

Stumped for a moment, the man then said "Sorry! Could you please tell me where the library's at - asshole?"

Joke: Ben Bernanke

The Pope, a boy scout, and the Ben Bernanke are on an airplane. The engines fail, the plane starts going down, and the pilot comes out: "Sorry Boys, he says, only 3 parachutes left and I'm taking one." and he jumps out. Ben Bernanke says, "I am the smartest man in the world, and I believe it is imperative that I survive and continue to guide the recovery." He grabs a parachute and jumps out of the plane. The Pope tells the boy scout, "I am an old man and I am ready to meet God, so you may use the remaining parachute, my son." The boy scout replies, "No worries father, we've still got two parachutes. The smartest man in the world just jumped out of the plane with my backpack."

Joke: Oma Margot 2: Dating

The third European joke I know, told to me by my grandmother when I was about to go out on a date:

"Remember, it's important to be in bed by 10 so you can be home by midnight."

Joke: Castro and the Pope

Fidel Castro and the Pope are walking along a Cuban beach, and the Pope's hat blows off and lands several yards from shore. Castro walks on the water, grabs the hat, and gives it back to the Pontiff.

The next day, Newspaper headlines read:

In Vatican City: "Pope performs miracle on Cuban Beach"

In Havana: "Great Leader Castro becomes Successor to Jesus"

In Miami: "Castro Can't Even Swim"

Joke: A man and a woman are on a Sleeping Car

When the time comes to go to bed, they discover that there is only one blanket.

The woman smiles at the man and says "You know, just for tonight, we could pretend we are married"

The man thinks a bit and says: "OK, get your own damn blanket".

Joke: Daisy 3: Tie Salesman

A man was crawling across the desert, dying of thirst. He comes across a stand in the dessert.
"Ties \$50.00".

Man: "Do you have water?"

Vendor: "No I only sell ties."

Man: "You @#\$\$%\$# asshole. I'm dying of thirst."

Vendor: "There's a restaurant 5 miles in that direction. They have water."

The man crawls away and hours later, he crawls back.

"Your brother Moshe said that I can't get into the restaurant without a tie."

Joke: Daisy 2: Cohen

A man is told to contact a spy named "Cohen" at 10 Dyan street in Tel Aviv with the passcode
"The moon in August is Full"

He goes to the address and lo and behold, dozens of Cohens.

So he buzzes the apartment 2B and says "The moon in August is Full".

Apartment 2B audibly pauses a moment and replies. "This is Cohen the Baker. You want Cohen the Spy. He's in 3C."

√Joke: Daisy 1: Blessings

During some ceremony where a man was supposed to receive blessings, an old woman said
"May you have many problems."

The man responded "What kind of a blessing is that?"

The woman responded "Well, if you have only one problem, it must be a pretty big one..."

Joke: Oma Margot 1: Philosophy

My german grandmother said one should never discuss politics, religion, money, sex, neighbors or relatives during polite conversation:

"What's left?" I asked. "Food" and "Art" she said.

That brings to mind this joke:

A man is about to go out on his first date, but is worried that he will have nothing to talk about, so he tries to get some advice from a friend.

His friend tells him not to worry, girls are always ready to talk about three topics: Food, Family and Philosophy.

So the guy goes out on the date, the conversation lapses and he remembers his friend's advice.

Family: "So, do you have a brother?" "No", the girl replies.
"Well, struck out there" he thinks.
Food: "So, do you like cheeseburgers?" "No", the girl replies.
So, one left: Philosophy
"If you had a brother, would he like cheeseburgers?"

Joke: Thin Bachelors

The second of the three European jokes I know (told to me by my then German girlfriend).
Do you know why bachelors are so thin and married men are so fat?
At night, a bachelor goes home, looks inside the refrigerator, doesn't see anything interesting and so goes to bed.
Whereas a married man comes home at night, looks inside the bed, doesn't see anything interesting and so goes to the refrigerator....

Joke: Talking Frog

But here is one of my favorite Silicon Valley stories...
A Silicon Valley engineer came across a talking frog and put it in his pocket.
The frog, eager to be released said "Let me out, Let me out and I'll get you a supermodel as a girlfriend!"
The engineer takes the frog out, looks at it, smiles and puts it back in his pocket.
The frog cries "Let me free, let me free, and I'll give you more treasure than you can spend!"
Again the engineer looks at the frog, smiles and puts it back in his pocket.
The frog cries "Let me free, let me free and I'll give you an island kingdom!"
Again the engineer puts the frog back in his pocket.
The frog cries out "I don't understand, I've offered you a beautiful woman, treasure and an island. Why won't you let me go?"
The engineer said Look, this is Silicon Valley, I have lots of rich friends with pretty girlfriends and their own islands.
But not a single one has a talking frog...."

Joke: Furniture Salesman

A non-French speaking furniture salesman from Dusseldorf went to Paris.
He met a woman in a bar and since he could speak no French, he drew a picture of two people eating dinner.
He showed it to the girl and she nodded and so he took her out to eat.