

CHAPTER XX



We eventually sold the travel agency and I decided to run for a seat on the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, was elected and served a couple of years as Treasurer of that organization. Upon completion of my term on the Chamber Board I decided not to run again and was given the Chamber Lifetime Achievement Award for my many years of service to the Chamber and my community.

After my retirement from the Chamber, I took a position as General Manager of the Temecula Town Association in which capacity I served for five years. When I left the Town Association we started our last business venture called The Harker Group. It was an event planning and coordinating firm and during the several years we ran the business we put on Air Shows, Rodeos, Street Fairs, Rod Runs and similar events. Evelyn was the founder of the first hot air balloon races in Temecula, which later evolved into the annual regional Temecula Balloon and Wine Festival.

In the meantime our son Jim Taylor began working for a local animal hospital at Lake Elsinore and decided that he wanted to be a veterinarian. He lived in an apartment that was part of the hospital complex and was on 24 hour duty caring for the animal patients. It was then that he acquired a little cocker spaniel pup which he named "Missy" who now lives with us. Jim finally informed us he was gay and moved to Cathedral

City near Palm Springs where he and his boy friend bought a house. He later told us he had tested HIV positive and in July 1995 Jim died of AIDS. We were both with him at the end of his life. This was followed by the death of Sandra a few months later, from a heart attack, in October of that same year. Four years earlier our grandson Eric was killed on his sixteenth birthday by a drunken motorcycle driver in Eric's home town of Steamboat, Colorado.

This was a very traumatic time for us and is still a hard thing for us to deal with. A couple of years after Jim's death, his friend Michael with whom he had lived, sold the house in Cathedral City and moved to Florida at which time Jim's dog Missy became ours. In 1986 I was appointed to the Old Town Temecula Historic Preservation District Local Review Board and have served the last four years as chairman of that City Commission. It is our responsibility to see that the circa 1890 to 1920 architectural ambiance of the Old Town of Temecula is preserved.

Back in 1985 after several moves to different locations around Temecula we settled in Heritage Mobile Home Estates where we are finally enjoying something resembling retirement. In 1997 I was elected to the Temecula Town Association Board of Directors where I have been serving as treasurer of the Association. I spent a year on the founding Board of the Temecula Valley Film Council which sponsors the annual and well known film festival in Temecula.

After moving to Heritage Park, I finally satisfied a life long curiosity by making three visits to nudist resorts around the valley. I found it to be a relaxing and interesting experience that was not at all sexually arousing. The sight of a bunch of pot bellied people running around naked leaves a lot to be desired.

In the past month we attended two weddings, Jim Harker's second marriage in Boise, Idaho and Rich's fifth marriage in Cambria, California. Our son John and his second wife Leanne just moved into a

new home a short distance from our place. As of this writing we have kids in the following locations:

Jeanne in Las Vegas, Nevada with her husband Bob, Patty in Exeter, California with her husband Dan, Georgia in Steamboat, Colorado with her husband John, Don in Sutherlin, Oregon with his wife Paula, Robert in Washington, Rich in Cambria, California with his wife Bobra, Harriet in Prescott, Arizona with her husband Roger, Jim and his wife Mary in Boise, Idaho and John and his wife LEEANNE in Temecula. At this time we have nineteen grandchildren and seven great grandchildren either by birth or from the various marriages. I will not attempt to name them all here but the mix is twelve boys and fourteen girls. If you also threw in all the ex-wives and ex-husbands along with those listed above it would truly constitute a crowd. In spite of it all, including the ups and downs over the years, we are a happy and healthy family. I am sometimes awed when we all get together and I realize that I and my two wives are responsible for it.

Today is June 15, 1999 and I've sort of come to the end of this life story. I'm sure I will think of other things as time goes on that I should have included but I believe that I've provided enough for you to figure out what makes me tick. Since this is my first attempt at a thing like this my question is, how do you stop it? Do you keep on writing until the day you die? I don't think so, but I still have a number of years ahead of me and more living to do, so do I write a sequel in five years from now? Maybe, if there is anything worth passing on to my family. On second thought you will all be living those final years with me and will know what I'm up to and doing. On that note I am going to bring this thing to a close, probably much to your relief. In doing so I have one final comment. It has been a wonderful and exciting life that has brought me much joy. I just hope you have enjoyed reading this as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

I love all of you!

EPILOGUE



As indicated previously I have chosen this epilogue to recount two important phases in my life, namely, The Boating Years and the Flying Years and I will cover them in that order. Believe me, while they played a significant role in my life, they did not take priority over my family. Rather they involved the family and we all enjoyed the experiences they brought to us. So let's get on with it.

