Hi gang, I am sure by now everyone knows we lost two hams this month which we will miss. Wendell WØTQ was one of the finest examples of what a real ham was. If you drove through Concordia you will have used his repeater. If you ever checked in on the Ks Weather Net or the Kansas Sideband Net, you might have found him as the Net Control. If you ever checked into the ARRL Ks CW (code) tfc net, you would hear him there. If you went to the Kansas Nebraska Radio club, you would find him extremely active. I was a early member of the club, 1949 to 1952 when I took off for K-State and WØQQQ. Jim N0STV, said, "The club has taken over the Amateur of the Year. His big shoes will never be filled! We considered him Mr. Amateur Radio." That is real good news to my ears Jim..!

We also lost our Midwest Director. Wade WØEJ and Bruce KØBJ is now our director and HQ is working on a new Vice Director. Please read the SILENT KEY column below for all the details.

I am feeling better but still limping and don't have much get up and go. Thanks for UR prayers..!

♦ Don't forget to fly your flag on 9/11.

♦ I recently sent out a KAR special with 50 photos from the air of someone flying to the Oshkosh, WI fly-in and some photos on the ground there. Here is a surprising reply from a Kansas ham now living in Wyoming..............

Orlan: The 10th frame is the Jim Bridger Power Plant 30 miles east of Rock Springs, Wyoming. I retired from there 8 years ago.

Cecil - NØCY/7

♦ As you all know Jim KØNK does the Pony Express Special event station each year and I sent him "A real telegraph office" http://www.telegraph-office.com/ and got the following reply........

Thanks Orlan. What a neat site. It sure has a wealth of information. We had a good Pony Express SE activity. It's a great meet-the-people activity. Some are interested in the history of the telegraph, some are interested in ham radio, others want to try their hand with a straight key, bug or iambic keyer. Others just stop by to pet the dog.

Jim KØNK
Thought you might like this for KAR: Pony Express rides another day Festival included communications link that killed it http://cjonline.com/stories/082806/kan_ponyexpress.shtml
Ken Kopp - KKØHF

Orlan, Here is something for the next newsletter.

On August 5th I rescued a 1950's vintage Collins 300J-2 AM broadcast transmitter from the KABI radio station site in Abilene, KS. This is a 250W transmitter that was still on the air up until July of last year (2005). The plan is to move it up to the 160M band. I would like to thank Rod Zeigler, chief engineer of KABI (Salina Media Group, et. al.), for making this transmitter available to me. I would also like to thank my crew, Jeremiah Hall KC0VTJ, Doug Hall KC0VQN, and Jake McConnell KC0VOS. There is nothing quite like moving a 900 pound transmitter out of a transmit shack in 104 degree weather while in the middle of a Kansas cow pasture in August. Pictures are available at http://www.seidkr.com/gallery/Collins_300J2

73 de Philip WV0T

The following URL takes you to a photo of the old Hallicrafters headquarters building. It still stands in Chicago.
http://www.w9wze.org/dm.php?dn=Chicago.multi Tom WØEAJ Denver

These are the FACTORY instructions for adjustments of the KENWOOD TH-F6A tri-band handheld. All of the adjustments in this radio are internally done in the on-board menu. Anyone wishing the manual, ask w0oyh@arrl.net to send it.

Supplied by Tom WØEAJ Denver

If you go to the web site http://www.lrtssaythanks.com/ you can pick out a thank you card and Xerox will print it - it will then be sent to a service man or woman currently serving in Iraq. You can't pick out who gets it, but it will go to some member of the armed services. It is FREE and it only takes a second. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our service folks knew how many Americans supported their efforts in protecting our freedom, and receive a bunch of these? Semper Fi, Anchors Aweigh, and Oooh Rahh! Do it NOW! Tom WØEAJ Fine idea Tom.... Orlan

Don't forget >>> http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=KS and http://www.arrl.org/ 73 till next time, Orlan Q. Cook WØOYH - your KAR ed dit dit

ARRL KS SECTION MANAGER - Ron KBØDTI
For the latest from the boss, go to >>> http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=KS and check out all the photos of the ARRL Ks State Convention at the bottom of the page.

ARRL KS SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR - Bob KØBXF
SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR ARES REPORT July 06 activity.
We heard from 13 Zones reporting 123 sessions 1095 QNI and 39 QTC.
ZONES NOT REPORTING 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F, 2A, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2G, 3B, 3D, 4D, 4E, 4F, 4G, 4I, 4J, 5B, 5C, 5D, 5E, 5F, 5G, 5H, 6A, 6B, C, D. Are we not interested in Public Service any more?
Any one with ideas on how to spur some activity within your respective counties please let KBØDTI or myself, KØBXF know how we may assist you in getting the job done. Disasters still continue to happen, Communication will still be needed, coordination of those willing to be of service should the need arise is still there! WANT TO BE A PART????????
Support the state traffic network system also. Monitor 3920 KHZ and 3610 KHZ as much as possible. Oh yes don't forget 3940 during emergencies because that's where KS RACES will be active also, especially the first Thursday of each month at 7PM
Bob Summers KØBXF ARRL SEC KS

**KANSAS STATE RACES OFFICER - Joseph WDØDMV**

Here is the Sept. RACES Report…Sept. 7, 2006

Stations check-in to the KS RACES Net

- WAØSRR Brown County
- NØENO Johnson County
- WØPBV Riley County
- NØUB Montgomery County
- KCØEH Montgomery County
- KØBXF Wyandotte County
- KBØDTI Linn County
- KDØAY Harvey County
- NØZIZ Johnson County
- WDØDMV Shawnee County NC

10 QNI Ø QTC

73, Joseph WDØDMV - KS RACES Officer

**KANSAS ARES REPORTS - from active ECs.**

◆ Here is the ARES Dist 6F report for AUG 2006
- 8-6-2006 1 NET QNI-9 QTC-0
- 8-13-2006 1 NET QNI-8 QTC-0
- 8-20-2006 No NET due to KS Section meeting
- 8-27-2006 1 NET QNI-7 QTC-0
- SKYWARN – No SKYWARN activity for AUG
- Steve Benson NØBTH - EC Dist 6F

◆ August 2006 ARES Dist 3A
- Zone 3A sessions = 34 QNI = 434 QTC = 42
- SkyWarn Activation = 3 QNI = 17 QTC = 6

The Tornado inoccasions. My report to the NWS Office in Goodland via the .82 Colby repeater was the first notice they received ref the the south part of Colby last month added to the local excitement. SkyWarn nets were activated on three tornado. They had just placed Thomas county and Colby in a severe thunderstorm warning, but did not see any indication of a tornado on radar. I have the KOFJ-10 TelPac node installed at 300’ just west of town on 145.010. It works well for the entire county. Several of us are checking WinLink email using PacLink AGW. We are working on integrating this mode into our EmComm plans for the county and ARES/RACES. Jim KCØHBR and I met with NWS Goodland personnel last week to discuss SkyWarn activities for the winter months. They are going to prepare monthly info segments for our Thursday evening nets to educate members on different aspects of SkyWarn weather activities. Still working on a few new members and our OCT SET. It was nice to see everyone in Salina last month. I was very sad to hear about Wade yesterday. I always enjoyed visiting with him whenever I got the chance.
Net Sessions............4  
Check-Ins (QNI)........28  
Stations Participating...K0EQH, WB0QYA, N0KQX, N0OXQ, AC0E, N0OMC, KC0AMF, W0OAG, KC0IVP and N0YK

Rod Hogg  
K0EQH  
NCS

Reminder: The SHARC Annual "SharcFest" will be held Sunday, Sept 17th at the 4H Building in Scott City. 11AM-4PM, all are welcome, covered dish dinner at 12N.

W9BSP, ENSOR MUSEUM OLATHE KANSAS:
Dear members and friends of Ensor,

I'm skipping the html fancy layout this time in favor of simplicity and speed.

First of all, last Saturday morning we had unexpected visitors to the Sell & Swap meet, our next to last one for the summer. [ October 7th will be your last chance this year to join into this event]. We had a photographer and a writer for the K. C. Star, Olathe edition, ask questions and take notes for a solid 90 minutes. Several of those present were asked for input and naturally gave their best.

The resulting article appeared in Wednesday's edition. In it you will see that we promoted the radio hobby and service for the benefit of those who are unfamiliar and curious. It can be read on line here.


The other bit of worthy news to share is the plan to re introduce the W9UA call and radio transmitter built to use the call letters at the old Olathe High School in 1934, 72 years ago. Marshall Ensor used the radio to instruct advanced students in electronics and amateur radio. Member Harry Krout, W0YQG did a fine restoration of it. The MEMO club gained the additional call from the FCC last spring.

We are requesting the ARRL's QST magazine to list our plan of operating as a Special Event station on December 8 and 9. The frequency will be 1.904 mHz, and the operating modes will be AM phone, CW (morse code), and MCW (modulated CW) which is sent with AM tone on carrier. The operating time will be early evening well into the night both Friday the 8th & Saturday the 9th. The top band (160 meters) should be as good as it can be at this time of the solar cycle. The rig is low power and we will re configure the current antenna to be more useful.

A limited number of properly licensed MEMO applicants may be allowed to operate in the event.
Thanks for your support of the Ensor Museum and our radio club.

73, and best wishes,

Larry Woodworth, W0HXS
Ensor Manager
MEMO President

SILENT KEYS:

◆ WENDELL D. WILSON WØTQ
Wendell D. Wilson, 80, Concordia, died Aug. 29, 2006, at Salina Regional Health Center. He was born March 1, 1926, at Sterling, to James Orville and Florence Fricker Wilson. He married Bonnie B. Stephan on Aug. 13, 1950, at the Presbyterian Church in Concordia. In 1959, they moved to Concordia, where they operated a small two-way radio business for several years. He was preceded in death by his wife on Oct. 27, 1996. He was very involved in amateur radio, both locally and throughout the state. He held many offices for the local chapter of Amateur Radio Relay League. He worked at KNCK for 30 years before retiring in 1989. He served in both the WWII and Korea. He was a member of the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Concordia Chamber of Commerce, the North Central Kansas Chapter of SCORE, the American Legion Post #588 and VFW Post #76.

Survivors include three daughters, Pam Pearson and husband Bill of Overland Park, Jan Bombardier and husband Vincent of Benton, Kan., and Veronica Wilson of Johnstown, Pa.; six grandchildren, Stacie Ormerod and husband Sean of Wichita, Stephanie Kacsir and husband Sean of Maple Grove, Minn., Alissa Janey and husband Greg of Brooklyn Park, Minn., Aaron Bombardier and Kevin Bombardier, both of Benton, Kan., and James Pearson and wife Bethany of Overland Park; four great-granddaughters; and one great-grandson; two brothers, Dale Wilson and wife Ann of Las Cruces, N.M., and Howard Wilson of Edmond, Okla.

He was preceded in death by his wife Bonnie, his parents and one brother, Jimmie Wilson.

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 2, at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany in Concordia with the Rev. Bruce E. LeBarron officiating. Burial will be in Pleasant Hill Cemetery with military graveside honors by VFW Post #588 and American Legion Post #76.

Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society or the St. Ann’s Guild of the Episcopal Church. Friends may call from 9 a.m.—9 p.m., Friday, at Chaput-Buoy Funeral Home, 325 W. 6th St., Concordia, KS 66901

Sid Ashen-Brenner N0OBM Thank you Sid for sending this. Orlan
District Emergency Coordinator Kansas District 2
n0obm@arrl.net or sashen@swbell.net
Homepage http://www.qsl.net/n0obm
◆ I am sure you have heard of Wendell Wilson's death! He became a silent key Tues, August 29 and services were Saturday Sept. 2nd. The club has taken over the Amatuer of the Year. His big shoes will never be filled! We considered him Mr. Amateur Radio. Jim N0STV
◆ Just returned home from OHIO trip to Caroline's brothers Sorry to hear about Wendell
Bob K0BXF
ARRL Midwest Division Director Wade Walstrom, W0EJ, SK
NEWINGTON, CT, Sep 1, 2006 -- ARRL Midwest Division Director Robert W. "Wade" Walstrom, W0EJ, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, died August 31 during surgery. He was 59. An ARRL Life and Diamond Club member, Walstrom was elected in 1999 to succeed retiring Midwest Division Director Lew Gordon, K4VX. He won a third term (2006-2008) as Midwest Division Director last fall. Born in Nebraska and raised in South Dakota, he'd been an Amateur Radio licensee for 46 years and previously held the call signs K0ZTV and WA6TXE. Please go to >>> http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/09/01/6/?nc=1 for the full story or go to http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/2006-arlx005.html for 06-Sep-2006 ARLX005 ARRL Midwest Division Director Wade Walstrom, W0EJ, SK

I am deeply saddened to report to you that Director Wade Walstrom, W0EJ, became a silent key this morning while undergoing a lung biopsy at a local hospital. Solveig called me a few minutes ago with the unfortunate news. Further arrangements will be passed on as they become available. With sadness, Joel W5ZN

As you all know Wade's EE knowledge, love of ham radio, boardmanship and willing service to ARRL will be sorely missed by members of the Midwest Division and our board. While Joel's news (phone call relayed by Janice) came as a shock it wasn't a complete surprise. Wade was not his usual spot-on self two Sundays ago at the KS convention in Salina, and last Thursday he asked me to cover him at Joplin, mentioning he thought he could be headed for the hospital again. When my report email went un-commented on I was afraid he might indeed have been sent to the hospital, but goodness -- this was not expected. I suspect he may have been more concerned than he let on..... Wade had health issues 2+ years ago and was found to have a leukemia-like condition. The Drs thought it was not as serious as leukemia, but the nebulous nature of it was troubling. He'd improved enough by election cycle time to re-run, but was having troubles again the last few months -- in particular the past 3 weeks. If I hear further details that haven't been passed along I'll QSP. 73 OT Bruce

KØTHP - SK
Sanford L. Peck, 85, of Kansas City, KS, passed away August 10, 2006 at the Presbyterian Manor. Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Monday, August 14, 2006 at Maple Hill Funeral Home. Burial will be in Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens. Friends may call Monday, 9-10 a.m. at the funeral home for visitation. Family suggests contributions be made to Crestview Church. Survivors include: wife, Alice Peck; daughter, Carolyn Hunsucker; daughter, Shirley Jenkins; brother, Victor Peck, sister, Elizabeth May Knigth; 6 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; 7 great-great-grandchildren. (Arr: Maple Hill Funeral Home, 913-831-3345). Published in the Kansas City Star on 8/13/2006. http://www.legacy.com/KansasCity/DeathNotices.asp?Page=Lifestory&PersonId=18830980

TU Bill Barnes WBØNSQ for this one.

Orlan, This was published in the Wichita Eagle this morning. Steve held the callsign KX0P and was a good friend of mine. He was killed in a powered glider takeoff crash 2 days ago at Jabara airport here in Wichita. FAA is investigating the crash, and so far no cause has been released. The story on the crash was published in yesterday’s Eagle. Thanks, Jim, W0EB
Stephen M. Siedhoff

Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha
Orlan, Thanks for KAR.

I am a U. S. Navy Vietnam Veteran. I was an aviation electronics technician. One of the things we used to kid about when the pilots would come back to the carrier after their sorties and write up their trouble reports was this one.

I-F-F does not work in O-F-F position.

Well dah.

Regards, Larry Joy, WN8P

♦ Two of Adam and Eve's kids were passing by the locked gate of "The Garden of Eden" and one says to the other, there is where our parents ate us out of house and home. oyh
"♦ The last time the French asked for 'more proof' it came marching into Paris under a German flag."
--David Letterman
♦ Tech support: What kind of computer do you have?
Female customer: A white one...

Customer: Hi, this is Celine. I can't get my diskette out.
Tech support: Have you tried pushing the Button?
Customer: Yes, sure, it's really stuck.
Tech support: That doesn't sound good; I'll make a note.
Customer: No , wait a minute... I hadn't inserted it yet... it's still on my desk... sorry....

Tech support: Click on the 'my computer' icon on to the left of the screen.
Customer: Your left or my left?

Tech support: Good day. How may I help you?
Male customer: Hello... I can't print.
Tech support: Would you click on "start" for me and...
Customer: Listen pal; don't start getting technical on me! I'm not Bill Gates.
Thanks to Jerry in Miami, FL for these.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:
♦ Orlan, That was quite an experience you had. Hope that you get on the mend and know that our hearts, thoughts, and prayers will be with you in the days ahead. Take care!
Hello "O"—> Thank you for this issue of KAR. I thoroughly enjoy reading through it. It kind of puts me in the middle of a bunch of really nice guys. You amateur radio guys seem to have a very close knit group. Very happy to hear your up and about. Take care and watch that first step, IT'S A BEAUTY!!

Jerry

Hi Orlan, I’m sure sorry to hear about your fall but glad you received prompt medical attention and sounds like you are being well taken care of. I want to wish you a speedy recovery and I look forward to hearing that you’re back to running again soon, hi Sorry, it appears you won’t be able to make the hamfest but as you say there’s always next year. Always enjoy receiving KAR. It sounds like Bruce really came close to that tornado near Colby, those things can really be nasty.

73 and take care, Chuck KØBOG

Hi Orlan, Good to hear from you also. Thanks for your help in this process and the kind words..

I had no idea that the OO program was tough to ‘get in to’.. I thought that they might be needing volunteers, seems like many clubs and offices are always needing people. My dad is still active on the bands, lately it seems mostly mobile VHF/UHF FM work, but I know he’s been taking the 706 on camping trips also. I’ll look forward to hearing back from you.

All the best and 73,

Kyle Yoksh - KØKN
Olathe, Kansas

Many thanks to Jim, KC0PDY, for this! INTERESTING WEB SITES:

NOAA http://www.weather.gov/nwr/
Home Land Security http://www.emergencyemail.org
Space Station http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/station/reference/radio/
US Repeaters http://usrepeaters.com/

ORLAN, BOY IF RAINS, IT POURS. HOPE YOU ARE GETTING ALONG A LITTLE BETTER AND GETTING BACK ON YOUR FEET. WE’LL KEEP YOU IN OUR PRAYERS AND WILL MISS YOU IN SALINA.

JOHN KAØJMO I appreciate everyone’s prayers...... Orlan

Guess I should have sent this to you instead of BXF. Understand we need to keep him in our Prayers, having health problems.. Dennis

--- Original Message -----
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2006 5:24 PM I think I am the guy in need of prayer. Sending KAR to explain. Orlan
Subject: News

Thought you might be interested, we have a new Emerg. Mgr. Dir. in Marshall Co. "Jonathan York". He and the previous EMD displayed the new Emergency Communications Trailer at the Marshall County Fair this last weekend. Myself and others in the Marshall County Amateur Radio Club were recognized for contributing to its successful completion stage. It has positions of operations in several locations within. One of which is an Amateur Station using W0GCJ (Club call) on voice and packet, both on 2 M. 73’s Dennis K0BYK I knew Ernie WØGCJ when I was a kid in Belleville. He worked on our cab radios.

Wow!...now that sure would be nice to see in full production again!...Right now I am helping a fellow build a class D 50watt transmitter for AM....sure is fun and am learning a lot...also have been using the homebrew tube xmitters a lot...backed the power down to 1/2 watt and worked malta!..... also building knife switches out of solid copper with solid walnut handles and mounted on solid granite...all with porcline standoffs...good to hear from you and sure do enjoy the KAR...thanks es 73, Tom WBØZNY

Ham Site >> http://www.irony.com/ham-howto.html Supplied by Larry WØAIB

Jim, KC0PDY, sends this: http://www.mokanscan.com/ Supplied by Larry WØAIB

Orlan, Your welcome.......Glad to hear you are moving a bit... Hang in there Ole Timer :0) Mike KØPY - Wichita
I was really glad to see Preston get this! (The 2006 Kansas Amateur of the Year award)
73, Ken Kopp - KK0HF  Yah, he is a all around Kansas tfc handler.

A friend sent this to me. It is an interesting place for the collector of old equipment both broadcast radio's and amateur equipment. http://www.freewebs.com/wa6dij/index.htm
Larry WØAIB

Orlan, Thanks for sharing the pictures. I was at Oshkosh back in 2001 for the entire 3 weeks with the Civil Air Patrol. Lots of good memories.
Kevin NØUKM  My pleasure........ Orlan

Orlan, You have probably heard about Wade, it was such a shock since we had just seen him in Salina on the 20th and thought all was well.
http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/09/01/6/?nc=1
Got to make each day count I guess. Have a great Labor Day weekend.

73 and take care, Chuck KØBOG @ HQ

Orlan, being an old airplane nut, I simply loved this collection of photos. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I book marked them so that I can pull them up at any time to enjoy.
Jerry in Miami Fl.
PS: How do you feel? I pray you have enjoyed a tremendous improvement.

Orlan, Those were fantastic, thanks very much for passing them along. I hope all is well in Kansas.73, Chuck KØBOG @ HQ

That's it! You were named after a wayfaring Russian space suit! Mystery solved! Mike The surplus Russian Orlan spacesuit satellite re-entered and burned up in Earth's atmosphere.

Your name is good for something. Pat

My friend Orlan is "surplus"?! NYET!! -- John NØEl

I didn't believe it but I blew up one of the photos and carefully looked through the shading of the face window. It is definitely you in there! You have lead a secret life well hidden from us all that should be a best seller novel. Hope you're already working on it. I'll be watching the NY Times Best Seller list. I assume you've retired from actual space flights. Thank U Gary. I can always depend on you to lift my spirit.

Gary WØTM >>> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlan_space_suits

It was good to see Preston receive this honor. We certainly missed seeing you, but it looked like a lot of folks signed your get well card, that was a neat idea. I hope you are doing well. On the way to Great Bend after the hamfest I learned my daughter in Pratt had her baby, about a week earlier than expected, so I was able to see the newest addition to the family while I was there. An added bonus for sure. 73, Chuck KØBOG @ HQ
Subject: Geek Test

27.4167% for me... how about you?  
http://www.innergeek.us/geek-test.html

9.66469% - Geekish Tendencies. Now, should I celebrate or go hide my head in shame??! :)
Christine Godin

17.14548 percent for me. Although I almost bailed out of the test several times... Pen

Tom's Key Strokes:

It's 1965 - I was stationed at the Fleet Anti-Submarine Warfare Center, San Diego, and our club call was W6DCM (Donuts, Coffee, & Milk.... Dis Carded Merchandise). We had a hotshot, who thought nobody but > he could work DX. One evening, one of the guys disconnected the finals of his freshly-built Heath 20m monobander, then called CQ (from the empty room, next door) the signal came in VERY, VERY LIGHT on the S-line. The "patsy" pushes the op away, who was "trying" to work the rare DX, with "Lemme' show ya' how to do it"! After repeated calls, he managed to work none other than 6V6GT - after he couldn't find it in the DX countries list, we held one up, so he could see what an idiot he was - great fun.

Tom - WØEAJ

NOTE: for those of you who don't know what a 6V6GT is, it's an audio-output tube (glass envelope). It is a baby 6L6......... Orlan
This is a very nice story... if it doesn't take you back in time... well, there's something wrong with you.

Site for those hard-to-find tone boards for older rigs.

An entire page of good links, re. ham radio & hobby electronics.
http://www.aade.com/links.htm

Dysfunctional Geek test 27.4167% for me... how about you?  http://www.innergeek.us/geek-test.html

A great little story... (worth reading) By Michael Gartner.......

My father never drove a car. Well, that's not quite right. I should say I never saw him drive a car. He quit driving in 1927, when he was 25 years old, and the last car he drove was a 1926 Whippet. "In those days," he told me when he was in his 90s, "to drive a car you had to do things with your hands, and do things with your feet, and look every which way, and I decided you could walk through life and enjoy it or drive through life and miss it." At which point my mother, a sometimes salty Irishwoman, chimed in: "Oh, bull----!" she said. "Hehit a horse." "Well," my father said, "there was that, too." So my brother and I grew up in a household without a car. The neighbors all had cars -- the Kollingses next door had a green 1941 Dodge, the VanLaninghams across the street a gray 1936 Plymouth, the Hopsons two doors down a black 1941 Ford -- but we had none. My father, a newspaperman in Des
Moines, would take the streetcar to work and, often as not, walk the 3 miles home. If he took the streetcar home, my mother and brother and I would walk the three blocks to the streetcar stop, meet him and walk home together. My brother, David, was born in 1935, and I was born in 1938, and sometimes, at dinner, we'd ask how come all the neighbors had cars but we had none. "No one in the family drives," my mother would explain, and that was that. But, sometimes, my father would say, "But as soon as one of you guys turns 16, we'll get one." bo It was as if he wasn't sure which one of us would turn 16 first. But, sure enough, my brother turned 16 before I did, so in 1951 my parents bought a used 1950 Chevrolet from a friend who ran the parts department at a Chevy dealership downtown. It was a four-door, white model, stick shift, fender skirts, loaded with everything, and, since my parents didn't drive, it more or less became my brother's car. Having a car but not being able to drive didn't bother my father, but it didn't make sense to my mother. So in 1952, when she was 43 years old, she asked a friend to teach her to drive. She learned in a nearby cemetery, the place where I learned to drive the following year and where, a generation later, I took my two sons to practice driving. The cemetery probably was my father's idea. "Who can your mother hurt in the cemetery?" I remember him saying once. For the next 45 years or so, until she was 90, my mother was the driver in the family. Neither she nor my father had any sense of direction, but he loaded up on maps -- though they seldom left the city limits -- and appointed himself navigator. It seemed to work. Still, they both continued to walk a lot. My mother was a devout Catholic, and my father an equally devout agnostic, an arrangement that didn't seem to bother either of them through their 75 years of marriage. (Yes, 75 years, and they were deeply in love the entire time.) He retired when he was 70, and nearly every morning for the next 20 years or so, he would walk with her the mile to St. Augustin's Church. She would walk down and sit in the front pew, and he would wait in the back until he saw which of the parish's two priests was on duty that morning. If it was the pastor, my father then would go out and take a 2-mile walk, meeting my mother at the end of the service and walking her home. If it was the assistant pastor, he'd take just a 1-mile walk and then head back to the church. He called the priests "Father Fast" and "Father Slow." After he retired, my father almost always accompanied my mother whenever she drove anywhere, even if he had no reason to go along. If she were going to the beauty parlor, he'd sit in the car and read, or go take a stroll or, if it was summer, have her keep the engine running so he could listen to the Cubs game on the radio. (In the evening, then, when I'd stop by, he'd explain: "The Cubs lost again. The millionaire on second base made a bad throw to the millionaire on first base, so the multi-millionaire on third base scored.") If she were going to the grocery store, he would go along to carry the bags out -- and to make sure she loaded up on ice cream. As I said, he was always the navigator, and once, when he was 95 and she was 88 and still driving, he said to me, "Do you want to know the secret of a long life?" "I guess so," I said, knowing it probably would be something bizarre. "No left turns," he said. "What?" I asked. "No left turns," he repeated. "Several years ago, your mother and I read an article that said most accidents that old people are in happen when they turn left in front of oncoming traffic. As you get older, your eyesight worsens, and you can lose your depth perception, it said. So your mother and I decided never again to make a left turn." "What?" I said again. "No left turns," he said. "Think about it. Three rights are the same as a left, and that's a lot safer. So we always make three rights."
"You're kidding!" I said, and I turned to my mother for support. "No," she said, "your father is right. We make three rights. It works." But then she added: "Except when your father loses count." I was driving at the time, and I almost drove off the road as I started laughing. "Loses count?" I asked. "Yes," my father admitted, "that sometimes happens. But it's not a problem. You just make seven rights, and you're okay again." I couldn't resist. "Do you ever go for 11?" I asked. No," he said. "If we miss it at seven, we just come home and call it a bad day. Besides, nothing in life is so important it can't be put off another day or another week." My mother was never in an accident, but one evening she handed me her car keys and said she had decided to quit driving.

That was in 1999, when she was 90. She lived four more years, until 2003. My father died the next year, at 102. They both died in the bungalow they had moved into in 1937 and bought a few years later for $3,000. (Sixty years later, my brother and I paid $8,000 to have a shower put in the tiny bathroom -- the house had never had one. My father would have died then and there if he knew the shower cost nearly three times what he paid for the house.) He continued to walk daily -- he had me get him a treadmill when he was 101 because he was afraid he'd fall on the icy sidewalks but wanted to keep exercising -- and he was of sound mind and sound body until the moment he died. One September afternoon in 2004, he and my son went with me when I had to give a talk in a neighboring town, and it was clear to all three of us that he was wearing out, though we had the usual wide-ranging conversation about politics and newspapers and things in the news. A few weeks earlier, he had told my son, "You know, Mike, the first hundred years are a lot easier than the second hundred." At one point in our drive that Saturday, he said, "You know, I'm probably not going to live much longer." "You're probably right," I said. "Why would you say that?" He countered, somewhat irritated. "Because you're 102 years old," I said. "Yes," he said, "you're right." He stayed in bed all the next day. That night, I suggested to my son and daughter that we sit up with him through the night. He appreciated it, he said, though at one point, apparently seeing us look gloomy, he said: "I would like to make an announcement. No one in this room is dead yet." An hour or so later, he spoke his last words: "I want you to know," he said, clearly and lucidly, "that I am in no pain. I am very comfortable. And I have had as happy a life as anyone on this earth could ever have." A short time later, he died. I miss him a lot, and I think about him a lot. I've wondered now and then how it was that my family and I were so lucky that he lived so long. I can't figure out if it was because he walked through life. Or because he quit taking left turns. Michael Gartner has been editor of newspapers large and small and president of NBC News. In 1997, he won the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing.

 Undo something worthwhile too!

Fun with the ACLU

Wanna have some fun this CHRISTMAS? Send the ACLU a CHRISTMAS CARD! As they are working so very hard to get rid of the CHRISTMAS part of this holiday, we should all send them a nice CHRISTIAN card to brighten up their dark, sad, little world. Make sure it says "Merry Christmas" on it. Here's the Address, just don't be rude or crude. ACLU 125 Broad Street 18th Floor New York, NY 10004 two tons of Christmas cards would freeze their operations because they wouldn't know if any were regular mail containing contributions. So spend 39 cents and tell the ACLU to leave Christmas alone. Also tell them that there is no such thing as a Holiday Tree... It's a Christmas Tree
even in the fields!! And pass this on to your email lists. We really want to communicate
with the ACLU! They really DESERVE us!!
MIGHT WANT TO WAIT TILL CLOSER TO CHRISTMAS, NEEDS TO BE A
CONCENTRATED EFFORT.. ANNOY A LIBERAL TODAY

◆ An answer to an old shipmate who sent me HIS story.

Story in our family is that Dad had a pretty serious accident in about 1933 or so, and never drove
after that. Mom drove everywhere - we got our first car in 1953... my Uncle Bill (#2) worked for
Chevy, and he got us a "demonstrator" with a straight-six and a "powerglide". It was powder blue
and a 4-door. On the way home from my Uncle’s place, Mom was in process of pulling out to pass
a car when my Father GRABBED and YANKED the steering wheel back, just in time to see the
oncoming car WHIZZZZ past the other way... he’d saved us all. Mom didn’t pass much after that. I
don’t think she ever admitted that Dad saved us with his lightning reflex, but it was the truth.

Papa always rode the bus or "streetcar"... the walk home was 1.2 miles from the tracks to our
house in Kansas City, MO (I measured it a few years ago), and rain, shine, snow, sleet, hail, or heat
did not deter him. I still have the vise that he bought and carried home on the streetcar, then
lugged it home in his arms... Pop had never owned tools as a kid, so he proceeded to procure them
(except for car tools - he could NOT fix anything mechanical), beginning with the vise, then a wood
plane, and so on. He also acquired a heretofore hidden talent - workbenches... the absolute best
ones in the world.

Dad's workbenches did not wiggle, did not shake, did not move! They just sat there, in spite of
sawing, filing, pounding, bending, or banging... just sat there and held his prized vise. They lent
new meaning to the word "solid"... I suspect that if you look the word up in your Funk & Wagnalls,
you’ll see a picture of one of Dad's workbenches there.

When he was 45, he was laid off - nobody hired guys over 40... period! He was very hurt, a proud
man, it was like a bayonet in the stomach to him - he looked, and looked, and looked... Finally he
found a job as a custodian in a library (truly mixed emotions for Dad, who was a voracious reader).
They said he'd have to learn how to drive the "Bookmobile" - 9.5 tons of vehicle! He took lessons
from Mom, but that was a disaster - so he took "professional" lessons... got his license, then his
commercial license..."What's your Dad do?"... "He drives a bookmobile!".... "Ohhhh, Cool!"

Later on, he became the head custodian for a highschool, and Mom said "I'm tired of picking you
up at 11 o'clock at night - you're getting your own car!"... I was moving to Colorado, so I gave Dad
my '73 Volkswagen squareback... it was called "push-push", 'cause that's the sound it made when
the #3 cylinder leaked... we never did get it to stop, in spite of repeated head changes, cylinder
changes, gasket changes, and multiple hitting and cursing sessions. Later - the ignition switch
broke, and being of good Czech extraction which means you don't spend money on foolishness, my
Uncle Bill eschewed a new switch and configured it in an "unconventional manor", so you had to
hook an alligator clip to a wire, to turn on the fuel pump (injected pancake engine), then hit
another switch to make the starter work - nobody could steal that car... nobody!

Pop suffered through 5 heart attacks, and the discovery of lymphoma "M". He outlived every other
guy he'd been to the doctor with - all of 'em. It was the VA who finally got him. An operation gone
bad...bastards! His last words to me were "Take care of your Mother"... and I strive to do just that.
It's not easy, and sometimes I just wanna' say 'NO!', but there's Dad... whispering in my ear, and
reminding me... each and every time I walk past or use "the vise". I still have it - it still works - it's
a symbol...like his love, it can provide either gentleness or great force... and it never quits...
I suppose he planned it that way - my Dad who didn't like to drive.
Tom WØEAJ - Denver Thank U agn Tom for all of those key strokes and fine reading. Orlan

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