

# Stories from Wild Bill







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# What was your first big trip?



**M**y first big trip happened when I was a 10 year old. I was living in the Bay Area of San Francisco, California with my parents, and since they had lived there for about 10 years, they decided it was about time for them to visit friends and relatives back in the East Coast, especially in Pennsylvania where my father was from and Brooklyn, New York where my mother was from. At that time we had a 1949 Buick. I had two brothers and a sister, so there were six of us. We decided to drive in the middle of the country using Route 66 and, I think, route 30 along the way. I'm remembering this as a 10 year old back in 1950 so some of the details are a bit hazy, but I think my father allotted five days for driving. He had some pretty strict rules about how we're going to do it. One was that we wanted to average about 500 miles a day. Another is that we would put in 100 miles of driving before eating breakfast on each day and apparently there wasn't any curfew since we often ended up in motels after nine at night

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as I remember. So we made this drive, and unlike a lot of 10 year old boys, probably, I paid very much attention to where we went and what we saw and I still remember it today. Its part of why I love to travel, I think. We spent some time in Altoona, Pennsylvania where my father was raised and, as I said, in Brooklyn New York where my mother was raised and visited various relatives and friends and did a bit of sightseeing as well. As I recall, we climbed the Statue of Liberty. When it was time to return back home after about two weeks, we decided to take the southern route going back and therefore travel through various southern states. I remember that we carefully avoided going to the Grand Canyon. I never could figure out why, since I really wanted to see that, but my 10 year old vote didn't really carry very much weight. So, all in all, it was a very very memorable trip. In two years, the family was uprooted from California because my father was transferred back to the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area, and we got to drive across the country again, this time on the northern route, stopping at National Parks along the way.

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# Are you still friends with any of your friends from high school? How have they changed since then?



When I was in high school, at Lower Merion on Philadelphia's Main Line, I didn't have many friends outside of school; the reason was that I lived in a neighborhood populated with a lot of Catholic boys about my age. This group, other than me, went to various high schools throughout the area: Malvern Prep, St. Joes's Prep, South Catholic, West Catholic, Bonner, Haverford, and Thomas Moore, and formed a tight-knit social group. Of all of these guys, the only one that's still a friend is John Hartnett. He and I were closest in the group because of our more mature and serious approach to life. I was in the Army when John got married, but he was in my wedding. My wife and I are godparents to his children. When our second daughter, Katie, was looking at colleges, John set up appointments for her at

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Cornell University, where he was Comptroller of the the land grant side of the university. We spent ten great years living five miles apart in Delaware, where we frequently met socially. John says that I caused him to quit drinking after his 21st Birthday party, where I'm shown below. It took me thirty more years to quit. Also shown below are John and I in later years (I'm on the left).



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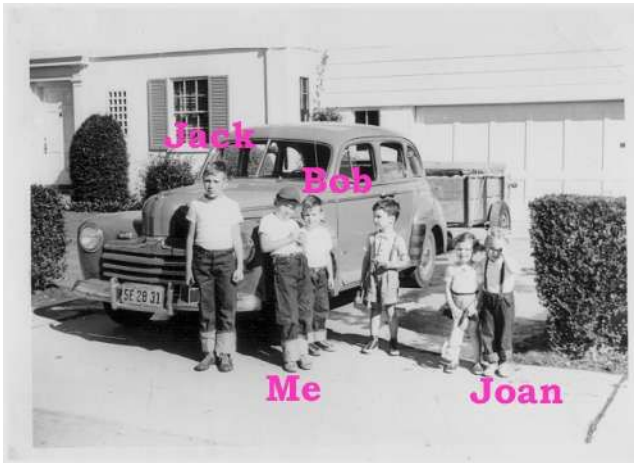
# What were your favorite toys as a child?



I remember playing with Lincoln Logs and Erector Sets, both building activities. One Christmas I received a tool box from Santa. I went next door to the Berson's and started cutting down their hedge with my new saw. Susie Berson was my first girlfriend. Our respective parents used to go to parties and stick us in the same bed to get rid of us. We explored kissing and hugging. I remember that somehow my parents gave us kids sombreros obtained from Mexico; I don't know if it was after a trip because we visited Mexico a couple of times when I was young. Anyway, there was an unfinished room over our garage which just had a wood floor. The door to this room was in my bedroom, so it became a playroom. We kids drew "roads" on the floor with chalk and used the sombreros as "cars" that we knelt on and pushed with our hands. Somehow this room also had sleeping bags stored in it, since the family did a lot of tent camping. I remember crawling in a sleeping bag with Susie lying

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on top of me and kissing her. It was pretty innocent, since we were pre-pubescent. I also made scooters out of roller skates and orange crates. I had a BB gun and didn't shoot my eye out. The picture shows us kids (Jack, me, Bob, and Joan) with two of our friends the Gaddis' from across the street who matched up with us (Jack, Bob, Jim, and Mary Jane). They were main playmates in the early days at 150 30th Avenue in San Mateo, California.

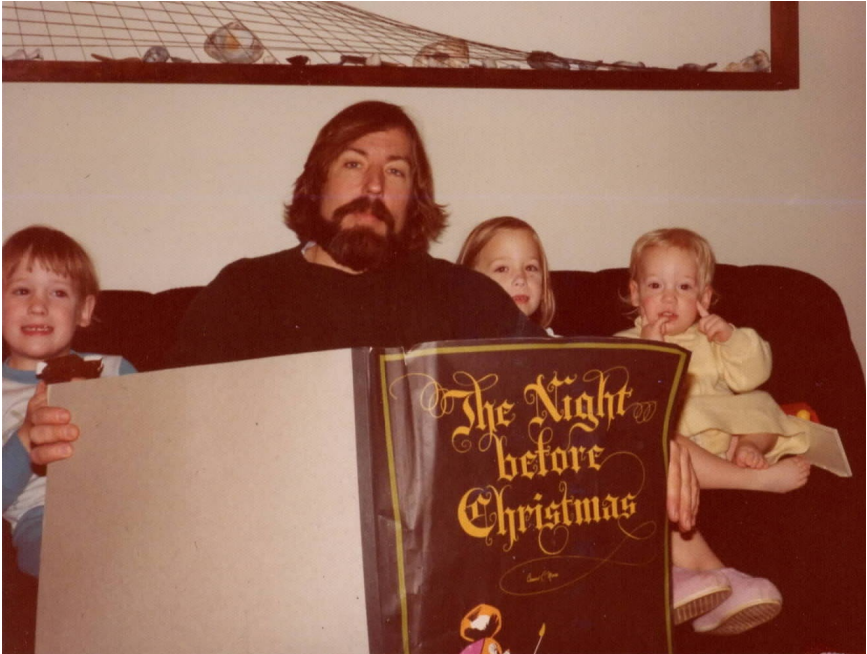


# What is one of your favorite children's stories?



I guess “A Visit from St. Nicholas” has to be my favorite. My Dad used to read it on Christmas Eve and it had a sort of magic about it. I was always comforted by the line, “The children were nestled all snug in their beds, while visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads.” That line made me want to go to bed to anticipate Christmas morning. When my children were old enough, I always read the poem to them on Christmas Eve. When they got “nestled”, I put on a red shirt or sweater and posed for my annual photo, sitting on the floor next to the tree, toasting Christmas with the glass of red wine put out for Santa. I must admit that I ate his cookie also. When grandkids came along, I had some opportunities to read it with them as well.

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# Where did you go on vacations as a child?



**T**he first thing that pops into mind is “Yosemite.” My father kindled a love for tent camping from his experience commanding a CCC Camp as an Army officer in the Pennsylvania woods during the Depression. He took every opportunity to get his family out camping on weekends and during the summertime when we lived in California. One of my earliest memories is from 1945, when my brother Jack and I were heading out camping for the weekend with my father, and we heard the announcement of VJ day, ending WWII on the car radio. My father pulled the car over on the shoulder and asked us if we wanted to go back to celebrate with our mother or continue on our trip. We chose camping. Tent camping in the 1940s was not common, so we always had choice campsites in beautiful locations. For weekends, we camped in county or state parks. During the summer, we concentrated on the National Parks: Yosemite, Sequoia, Kings Canyon, Lassen. Once at a campsite, we

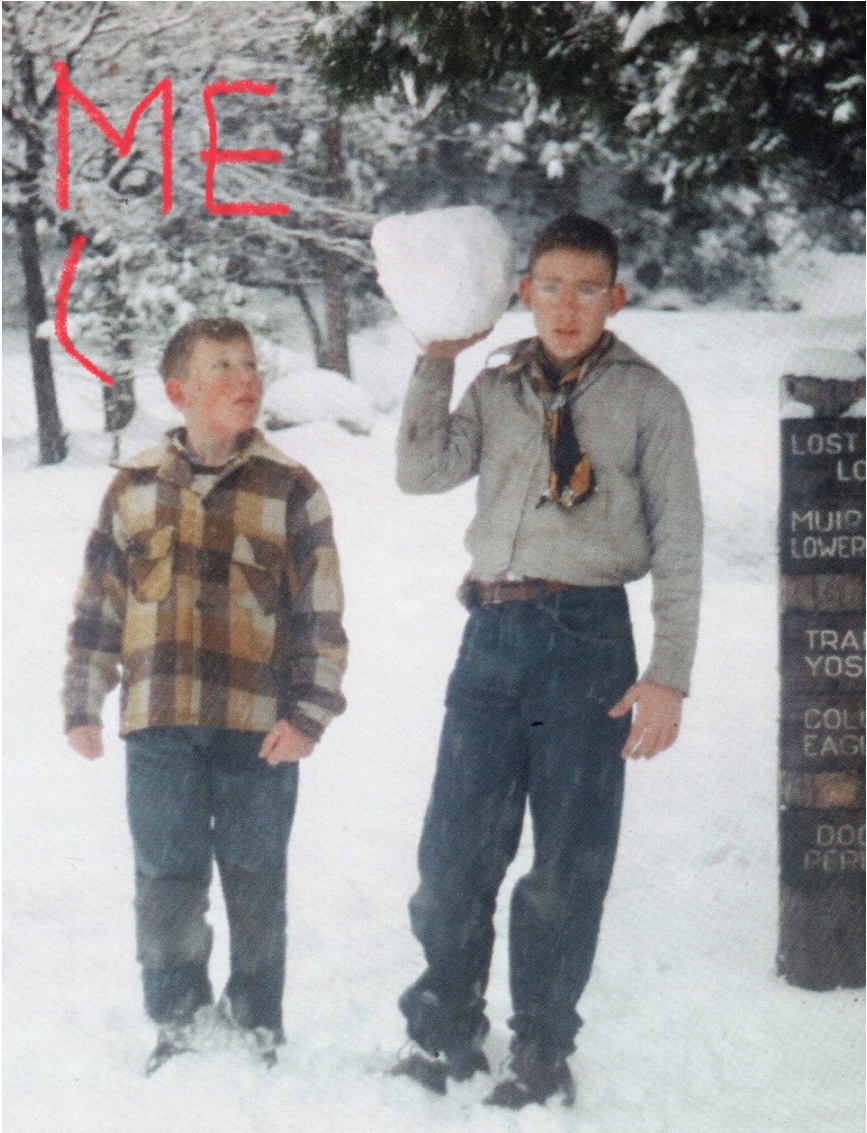
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did lots of hiking. My father often brought his 22 rifle with him and we shot at tin cans in a rifle range area. Our tents were two huge canvas umbrella tents with floors that could be connected by a short covered walkway. The three boys set up our cots in one of the tents and slept in sleeping bags. My parents put a double bed mattress on the floor of their tent and slept in a double sleeping bag. My sister had a small cot in my parents' tent and also slept in a sleeping bag. I remember the gas lantern and big propane stove that we used. For summer camping, we had a rental trailer for all of the gear. Campfires and toasted marshmallows were a staple of the experience. We often went to Yosemite in the winter with the family or with the cub or boy scouts. Playing in the deep snow was a special treat. A summer treat at Yosemite was the "Fire-fall," where hot coals from a bonfire were raked off Glacier Point to fall on the valley below as if a waterfall made of fire. The event was preceded by a voice on a megaphone shouting, "Let the fire fall." We watched it mostly from the valley, but a couple of times up on the point. One summer, when I was about 10, I told my parents that I wanted to climb Half Dome. They gave me a flat "no" answer. It took 57 years for me to fulfill that desire. The photos show the Fire-fall, my brother Jack and I in Yosemite in the winter, and daughter Katie and I descending from the top of Half Dome.

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# Are you still friends with any of your classmates from grade school?



**W**hen I was in grade school, we lived in San Mateo, California in the San Francisco Bay Area. I went to school at Beresford, a couple of miles from home, and walked both ways. The summer after 6th grade, my family moved to Penn Valley on Philadelphia's Main Line. The summer before I entered Villanova University, one of my grade school friends, Ken Weeks, sent me a letter telling me that he was also going to Villanova. We had him stay with us before he moved into his dorm. His roommate Tony became my philosophy professor when I was a junior, six years later. Ken was in Naval ROTC and had to leave Villanova because of a ROTC issue. I have had no other contacts from any classmates from grade school.

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# What was your Mom like when you were a child?



**M**y mom was born in Brooklyn, NY in 1909. I was born in 1940 in Kearny, NJ while my parents were living in Clifton, NJ. When I was 6 months old, My Mom, my Dad, my older brother Jack, and I traveled by rail to the San Francisco Bay Area where we became resident in San Mateo, CA. My Mom was unhappy about the move West, and more unhappy about our subsequent move back East in 1952. Her Father, two brothers, sister, and she were alcoholics and ultimately died from the effects of alcohol. Her mother did not drink. I loved my mother, but I was a tough kid to raise. I was a middle son, left-handed, and quite rebellious. My older brother was the perfect child, my younger brother was the easy one, and I was the trouble-maker. My sister was a typical invisible fourth child. I remember my mother talking about returning to teaching as she had been at the time of her marriage to my father. She never returned to any type of work, possibly another source of her unhappiness. She was often

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drunk at the dinner table, especially on Sundays. Most days, I did something naughty and received the reprimand, “Wait until your father gets home.” My father commuted to his office in San Francisco by train. When he got home in the evening, he would usually lead me out to the garage, pull my pants down, and spank the back of my legs with a ping-pong paddle. I knew that I needed to cry immediately to shorten the session. I always felt that the crime was worth the punishment and was never deterred from doing whatever I felt like. The only time I remember my mother directly punishing me was when she slapped me in the face for saying, “Shut up!” to her for the first and last time. My mother drove a Willys when I was a toddler. In the days before seat belts, kids could move all over the car unfettered. One day on a trip to the supermarket, I was crawling along the floor in the front seat when I spotted the accelerator pedal. I pushed it down to the floor and my mother kicked me across the car. That was the last time I did that, also. My mother was a terrible cook and served canned Spam, with embedded cloves, often as our main course. In spite of it all, my Mom and I got along most of the time.

The first photo shows my Mom and Dad enjoying themselves on a beach, probably before they had kids.

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The second photo shows the whole family, with me sitting next to my Mom, who is holding my sister Joan on her lap. This was possibly at Half Moon Bay, where we often day-tripped.

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# What is one of your favorite trips that you've taken? What made it great?



I've been on a lot of great trips through the years, most of them accompanied by my wife Cathy. One of the best was the result of Cathy's work with the EF travel company to take her students and others on three international tours in France, the British Isles, and Australia. Cathy received a reward from EF of a free week in any city of the world including airfare and lodging. Cathy and I thought about which city and when for a good amount of time before deciding that the city would be Athens, Greece. My brother Jack had organized a week of backpacking in Norway including me, my brother Bob and our wives. We asked EF if we could attach the two trips by flying to Athens and flying back from Oslo, Norway after two weeks. Looking back, this was asking a lot, but it didn't hurt to try. EF said yes so we set up the

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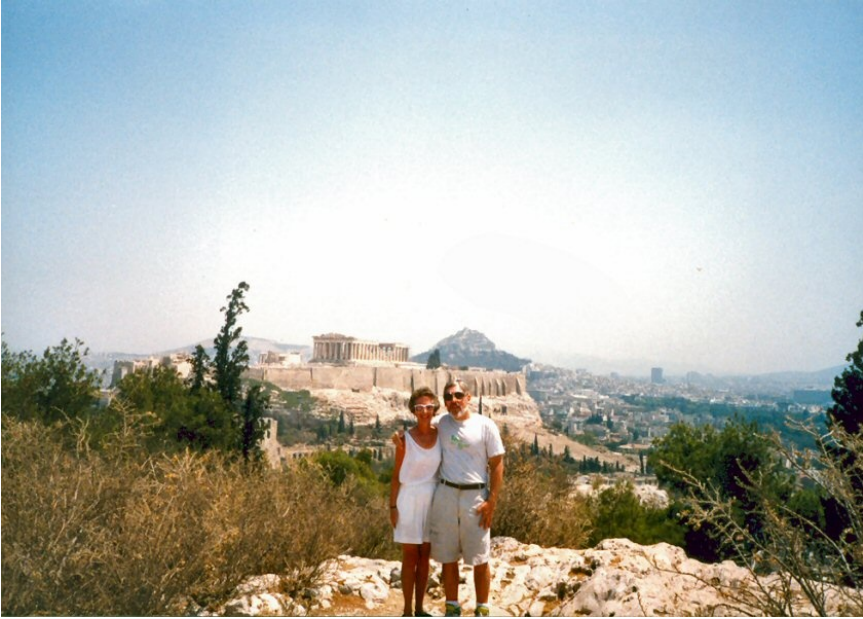
trip to begin at the end of June, 1990. We had to arrange transportation from Athens to Oslo. It's a long drive, so we bought expensive airline tickets to connect the two outings. We had no itinerary for the week in Athens, so we had the fun of planning a schedule. We wanted to see Delphi, home to the ancient Oracle, some Greek islands, including Mykonos, and the Parthenon. We decided that we would wait until we got to Athens to book the side-trips. The weather was absolutely gorgeous the whole time we were there. Part of what made it great was that our hotel was a moderately priced facility right in the middle of the market area. We were able to experience the real Athens, not a candy-coated, Americanized version in a 5 star hotel. The week in Athens and the ensuing back-packing trip can be found in the following two websites:

<http://www.capemaybeach.net/Greece/> and  
<http://www.capemaybeach.net/Norway/>

The first photo below shows Cathy and I on an hill with a great view of the Acropolis in Athens, Greece.

The second photo shows me with my backpack in the snowy mountains of Norway, a long, long way from Greece.

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# How did you celebrate your 21st birthday?



**M**onday, July 1, 1961 was a benchmark day and it came at a pivotal time in my life. In the world around me, we were in the Berlin Crisis of 4 June – 9 November 1961. President John F. Kennedy had been in office for six months, already stumbling on the Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba. I had just flunked out of Florida State University and had arranged to enlist in the Army on September 13, 1961. On the girlfriend front, I had recently bid adieu to my friend-with-benefits at FSU and had recently attended, with my parents, a graduation party at Bookbinder's in Philadelphia for a girl to whom I was a slave-with-benefits. Meanwhile, in the background was the one I loved, a girl that I had met when I was 16 and she was 15, but had mutually separated from to allow our relationship to continue at a more opportune time in our lives.

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I had tried to get away from my enslavement to a dominant, yet clingy, girlfriend starting in the summer of 1960, when I flew from my suburban Philadelphia home to Los Angeles to be a lab assistant/intern with a cancer research project in the Radiology department at UCLA. Upon return, I spent a few weeks living on the girlfriend's grandfather's boat in the Atlantic City Marina while I worked at a one-man hotdog stand at the Water Circus on the Steel Pier. I got to know the Diving Horse's handlers and saw that the horse was never a voluntary diver. Then, I flew to Tallahassee to enter my junior year at FSU as a math major. I joined a fraternity and had a wonderful time partying and hanging with my friend-with-benefits without bother to attend classes. Looking back, I can see that I was burning all the bridges and trying to get the girlfriend to break up with me and release me from her clutches.

To fill the time between FSU and the Army, I drove a Yellow Cab in Philadelphia, one of my best-ever jobs which included membership in the Teamsters. I have no idea where or with whom I celebrated my 21st Birthday, but I'll bet I got drunk.

The photo shows me at Thanksgiving, 1960, when I was 20 years old, on my first trip to Miami Beach with some friends from FSU.

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# Where did you go on your honeymoon?



Cathy and I married at noon on August 6, 1966, the same day and time as the wedding of Lucie Baines Johnson, the President's daughter, at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church in Wayne, PA, where Cathy lived with her mother and sister Marianne. I had graduated from Villanova with a mathematics major the previous spring and had been accepted for graduate studies at Penn State in mathematics on a NDEA Fellowship starting in the Fall. Both of us lived at home and were scheduled to begin a lease at Graduate Circle Apartments in State College, PA in the fall, so we decided to make our honeymoon an extended stay until we moved in at Penn State. To that end, we rented a cabin on Lake Wallenpaupack for three weeks following a two night stay at the Marriott on City Line Avenue in Philadelphia. On the morning of our wedding day, my brother Bob, who was my best man, and I went to the Marriott and arranged for roses and champagne to be delivered to our room before we arrived in the late afternoon.

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Our wedding reception was at Overbrook Golf Club in Villanova, right next door to Notre Dame de Namur Academy, where Cathy went to high school.

Our honeymoon started with room service sandwiches to go with our champagne. At some point Cathy called her mother to tell her that I hadn't abused her. The next day we enjoyed the amenities of the Marriott including the pool and hot tub. That night we ate in the Polynesian restaurant of the Marriott and then carefully crossed City Line Avenue to a bar where we ODeD on stingers. We made it back to our room safely. We were a bit hung over for the drive up to Lake Wallenpaupack the next morning.

Our cabin on the lake was quite nice and had two bedrooms, which the two of us didn't need. We had a rowboat for our use and we used it regularly. We set up housekeeping with me serving as the chef in residence. We didn't eat out until Cathy's mother arrived unexpectedly and uninvited along Father Gormley, her personal priest. We had just eaten dinner, so we just accompanied them to a restaurant and just drank and watched them eat. Later in our stay, our friends Chris and Jim Devine joined us for a couple of nights in the spare bedroom of the cabin. A couple of weeks into the honeymoon, we did a day trip to Philadelphia to attend a wedding of a friend.

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I was used to camping as a kid and loved mountains and lakes, so our cabin was great for me. Cathy, on the other hand, was used to the sort of vacation similar to the many cruises that we've gone on subsequently, and didn't love our honeymoon as much as I did.

The first photo shows Cathy while she is calling her mother from our hotel room.

The next two photos show Cathy and I at cocktail hour at lakeside.



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# Why are you called “Wild Bill?”



**M**y nickname was started by the South Jersey kayaking community, based on my exploits, especially my 13 crossings of the Delaware Bay (see [CapeMayBeach.com/kayaking.html](http://CapeMayBeach.com/kayaking.html)). I have always had a wild streak in my persona from my earliest years. I think that it is engendered by a combination of a very fertile imagination linked to an attitude of fearlessness.

My first exploit was as a toddler. I remember sitting in my high chair at the dinner table thinking about kicking my chair over backwards (imagination) and then doing it (fearlessness). My parents were appalled, but I was delighted.

Still a youngster in California, I had heard that Oleander leaves were poisonous. As I was walking by an Oleander bush on my morning walk to school, I grabbed a couple of leaves and stuffed them in my mouth. They tasted awful, but I didn't die, so it was a

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win of a sort.

As a teen, I had a chemistry set in my bedroom of our Penn Valley, PA home. One day I wondered what would happen if I mixed Potassium Permanganate with Hydrochloric Acid. What happened was my room started to fill with a green gas (Chlorine). I threw open my window and stuck my head out until the gas dissipated. Close call!

Again as a teen visiting Ocean City, NJ, I was walking along the boardwalk with some buddies one night at the time of high tide, with the ocean flowing under the boardwalk. I said, "How much will you give me to jump in the ocean with my clothes on? I collected a few dollars and jumped in. I was a good swimmer and didn't worry about it.

At Florida State university, I told a fraternity brother that I want to do a prank that would be remembered. My father had told me that as a student at Penn State, he had been involved in rolling a big artillery gun down the mall. I was looking for something even better. I came up with an idea and the two of us executed it. The exploit even made the NY Times and my grandmother mailed me a photo from the paper that I carried in my wallet for a number of years until it wore out. The photo was entitled, "A Red Letter Day." I can't reveal any other details to protect the guilty.

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In the Army, in Thailand, my Engineer company was having a beer blast in a depot which had some tanks with red lead primer on them. After a few beers, I suggested to a couple of guys that we steal one of the “pink” tanks, crash through the fence into the jungle, and plough our way to a dirt road I knew of and then drive into a small local village and point the tank gun at a bar to scare the villagers. We recruited one of the bulldozer drivers to drive and ran to the tank. Some of us sat on the fenders and others were inside of the tank. When we got to the dirt road, we saw and heard a bunch of security vehicles heading up the road toward us. At that exact time, we ran out of fuel. We abandoned the tank and melted into the jungle. Somehow we figured out how to sneak back into camp without being bitten by a cobra and unnoticed. We later heard that even our Colonel was amused when he heard about the “pink tank” incident.

In the summer of 1980, the family was visiting Ogunquit, ME for a couple of days prior to going to Bar Harbor. We were walking on the Marginal Way when we noted that the tidal Ogunquit River was running really fast toward the ocean. I asked my 9 year-old son Billy if he wanted to swim across with me. Billy was an accomplished age-group swimmer and he was all for it. We climbed down the rocks and headed to the river. I told Billy to stay upstream of me and told him to aim for the opposite shore although we wouldn't be going straight across. At the mouth of

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the river was a washing machine in the form of a standing wave, so we couldn't dilly dally. The hardest part was climbing out on the other side, but we made it!

I talked my wife into a couple of adventures. The first was a three day bike ride along the 180 mile C&O towpath on the Potomac River. The second was a one day rim-to-rim hike in the Grand Canyon on a brutally hot August day. Both of these are described on [CapeMayBeach.net](http://CapeMayBeach.net) using the "Trips" menu.

While on Safari in South Africa in 2015, we were to have a free day in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe after two weeks in the bush. Our guide asked what we'd like to do. I said that I'd like to bungee jump off the 420 foot high Victoria Falls Bridge. Our guide said he'd set it up. It was great! See [CapeMayBeach.net](http://CapeMayBeach.net), trips menu: Ultimate Africa 2015.

I have always been intrigued by "doubles", combining two independent events into one mega-event.

50K runs at Sloppy Cuckoo/Blues Cruise 2014: I had said that I would never run an ultramarathon after reading all of the horror stories about them. Somehow I got wind of the Blues Cruise 50K, which is run on a single circuit of trail around Blue Marsh Lake in Reading, PA. The course has lots of hills, but a generous time limit of 8 hours, so I decided to sign up. I trained as if for a regular marathon and felt that I needed more trail

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experience. I discovered that there was a 12 hour running event on the trails at PennyPack Park in Philadelphia, so I signed up and expected to only run a few of the loops. As the day wore on, I realized that I could reach the 50K mark and get a cuckoo clock, so I did. The most amazing thing about the Sloppy Cuckoo was how much coke and Gatorade I drank during the event, how many cookies I ate when I was done, and how I dipped pretzels in peanut butter for dinner in my room at Hampton Inn - all vegan, of course. This was my introduction to ultramarathons: eating contests with some running. My legs were totally trashed after the event, so I took it fairly easy during the week leading up to the Blues Cruise 50K. I had the goal of running to the marathon distance (26.2 miles) in 6 hours and then power walk the last 5 miles, but when I was about 2 miles from the finish, I ran the rest of the way for a total time of 7:21. I wasn't surprised about the cookies and coke this time. The race director (for both events) bemusedly said to me, "So, you used the 50K last week as a warmup?" Up to now, in 2022, I have run six 50ks.

Paddle for a Cause/Escape the Cape 2016: I decided to camp out in the car overnight before the Paddle for a Cause in Atlantic City. This was my third time kayaking the event in honor of my brother Jack, who had esophageal cancer. The first two times I did the 22.5 mile circumnavigation of Absecon Island. I was going to do the same this year, but I broke my rudder completely off of my kayak on the prior Monday and wasn't sure if I should

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face the wind and following seas without checking out myself and the watertightness of my kayak in this way. So, I opted for a shorter option, an 8 mile out and back paddle to Wonder Bar. I started the paddle chatting with another geezerly type in a kayak, but noticed two guys on SUPs who were really seriously booking and leaving us behind. I decided to try to catch them. They stayed ahead of me for over 7 miles, but both ran into trouble with the wind and current near the Brigantine Bridge. I was the first paddler to finish the 8 mile paddle in 2:08. The second paddler was 61. I was amazed at how fast I did the 8.8 mile course in spite of some nasty wind and current. I actually went aground at about 1:34 into the event and had to jump out of the kayak and pull it out of the skinny water. After the race, I had to rush back to Cape May in order to check-in for my second Escape the Cape Olympic length triathlon and put my bike in the transition area. We stayed with nearby friends overnight. The highlight of the event is jumping off of the Cape May/Lewes ferry Delaware and swimming a mile to the beach of Douglass Park in North Cape May. The water was really choppy, adding to the adventure. I've done 10 Duathlons and 14 triathlons with three different bikes and before Escape the Cape I never had a bike issue. With about a mile left in the almost 25 mile second leg, I popped my chain off as I rounded the Emerson Ave turn. I jumped off the bike, put the chain back on, got back on the bike, and tried to pass all of the riders that passed me while I was off

## Stories from Wild Bill

the bike. Also somewhere on the second of two loops, one of the three screws holding the cleat on my right shoe came off and the other two screws loosened, so my foot was sliding around, not helping my riding. I'm a very slow swimmer, but quite comfortable in the open water and have no endurance problems. The very choppy water that we encountered in the Delaware Bay after jumping off of the ferry didn't pose any real problem for me, which surprises me, but also delights me. I Finished the International distance for Escape the Cape in 3:17. I was the only competitor over 70, so I gathered in the Grandmaster award. Another fun Delmo Sports event.

Dopey/Key West Half 2017: The Disney World Dopey Challenge consists of four days of running progressively longer races: 5K, 10K, Half Marathon, Marathon. This was my second Dopey. Since then, I've done one more in 2022. My daughter Katie had signed up for the Half Marathon and her daughter Rachel had signed up for the 10K. The main thing about the 5K is that it provides another wake-up before 2 am. It was a lot of fun to run the 10K with Rachel. She dressed as Snow White and I dressed as Dopey. About 7 pm the night before, the half marathon was canceled due to a strong front coming through at about the time of the race start. A bunch of us in our hotel met in the lobby and planned to run on a loop that I designed near our hotel at 9 am. A family of Brits that were there for a destination wedding and Dopey set up a table for water and snacks on the

## Stories from Wild Bill

loop outside the hotel. Many people in different hotels ran that morning with their race shirts and bibs on. It was disappointing to have to run the race unofficially, but very heartening to see so many runners rise to the occasion and make the best of it. I had mapped out a solid training plan for this, my second Dopey, but other competitions and travel so affected my training that as this year's Dopey loomed near, I realized that I had only really trained for a half marathon. The 5K and 10K went well, and I ran close to my usual slow pace when I did my half marathon during Saturday mid-morning. When the marathon began, I decided to run to the halfway mat and then walk the rest of the way. To put my walking in context, in 2011 I walked the Goofy Challenge due to a training injury and did around a 3 hour half and 6 hour full. I'm not 70 any more, but I keep thinking that I should be able to walk a pretty good pace. So, around mile 22, my GPS told me that I was walking slower than the balloon ladies. I tried to force a faster walking pace, which for me has the side effect that I tend to glide over the ground. While doing this, I tripped over one of the reflectors on the road. I hit both hands, my right elbow, and left knee. I heard the crowd around me gasp as they saw an old guy go down. The funny thing about it was that rather than try to make me comfortable on the ground until medical help arrived, they got me back onto my feet so I could continue to race. Unfortunately, they didn't pause my Garmin, but strong hands lifted me up, for which I am very grateful. I don't think I could



## Stories from Wild Bill

have stood up on my own. I kind of limped in the rest of the way. A week later found me in Key West for the Half Marathon. My left knee still hurt, but a bunch of my Delaware running friends were there as the Certified Running Nuts team and I wanted to run the whole distance. It was murderous, but I made it. I'm planning to double-up Dopey and the Key West Half again in 2023.

The first photo shows Cathy and I on the South Rim after our Rim-to-Rim hike.

The second photo is from my bungee jump from the Victoria Falls Bridge.

The third photo shows Rachel and I after the 10K at Disney World.



## Stories from Wild Bill



Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# What is the farthest you have ever traveled?



**T**his seemed like an easy question until I started to answer it. The matter seems to indicate a trip from point A to B that covered more distance than any other trip. Can A and B be the same, as in a round trip? Is it the great circle distance from A to B, or the mileage of the exact route taken?

When I was 10 years old, I rode in the family car as we traveled from San Francisco to New York City and back to visit family back east. This was 1950 and the distance was 4,802 miles.

When I returned home from Thailand to Philadelphia after spending a year there in the Army, I started in Korat, 8,638 miles from Philadelphia. The route took me to Saigon to San Francisco to Philadelphia. This was 1963 and the distance was 10,762 miles.

My wife, children, and I spent 28 days one summer touring the USA, starting and ending in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania. We

## Stories from Wild Bill

traveled through Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, South Dakota, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, West Virginia, Ohio, and back to Pennsylvania. This was 1984 and we measured the distance as 8,000 miles.

When my wife and I returned to Fort Lauderdale after our safari in South Africa, we started in Cape Town, 7,657 miles from Fort Lauderdale. Our route took us to Johannesburg to JFK to Fort Lauderdale. This was 2015 and the distance was 9,901 miles.

When my wife and I returned to Fort Myers from our southeast Asian cruise, we started in Singapore, 10,459 miles from Fort Myers. Our route took us to Amsterdam to Atlanta to Fort Myers. This was 2018 and the distance was 11,424 miles, the WINNER!

The first photo shows Katie, Cathy, Alex, and Bill when we were leaving Yellowstone National Park.

The second photo shows Cathy and I in Cape Town after our safari.

The third photo shows Cathy and I touring in Singapore.



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





# What was your military experience?



I can't do better than to cite my Veteran's Day talk at Rock Creek RV Resort at their luncheon.

A VETERAN REMEMBERS 11/11/2012

RA13734299, that's a number I know better than my Social Security Number. The "RA" stands for "Regular Army", indicating that I enlisted in the Army, rather than being drafted. As a volunteer as of September 1961, I was often kidded by my fellow troops, many of whom were draftees with "US" numbers. I joined the service at a temporary dead-end in my life, when a bunch of craziness left me few options.

When I was in my senior year in high school in 1958, I had a desire to enlist in the Marines after graduation. In fact, one of the guys who signed my yearbook said, "See you in Paris Island." My parents dissuaded me, but I shouldn't have listened to them.

## Stories from Wild Bill

I felt that I was taking a ride through my life on a train whose course I hadn't charted.

So, when I stepped forward to accept my service in the Army on September 13, 1961, I was ready for a period of independent reflection and assessment of my life and future. I entered during the Berlin Crisis and was shipped to Fort Jackson, South Carolina for Basic Training. I was proud to be in my country's service and decided that I would do whatever was required of me. I developed the philosophy, "If not now, when? If not me, who?" I started to understand patriotism and opted for it wholeheartedly.

I attended Radio Relay and Carrier Operator School in Fort Gordon, Georgia and learned how to set up and use huge radios used to carry phone channels. Typically, these radios were deployed in mountaintop huts in remote areas to facilitate communications in a military theater of operation. I liked working with the equipment and graduated 2nd in the class. Afterward, I was shipped to Fort Bliss, Texas and assigned to an Engineer Battalion.

When I reported to my company, I was told that our biggest radio fit on the back of a  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton truck and our typical radio fit on the back of a Jeep. I was ordained as the Communications Chief and given a new MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) of Intermediate Speed Radio Operator. The "speed" had to do with

## Stories from Wild Bill

fluency with Morse Code, which I didn't know. Luckily, our radios and field telephones all supported voice communications. The most exciting period of my service at Fort Bliss was during the Cuban Missile Crisis in the fall of 1962. Our battalion wasn't involved in the impending invasion of Cuba so we were assigned to get other outfits' equipment readied and loaded onto trains heading to Florida while the personnel took quick and short leaves to say goodbye to loved ones before the operation. This was a scary time, and I was convinced that a nuclear war was inevitable. Not far from Fort Bliss was Biggs Air Force Base, so we were constantly being overflowed by B52 bombers and C135 refueling tankers. The only other excitement was going to Juarez, Mexico often and drinking 10 cent shots of tequila there in the sleazy bars. At the end of 1962, my company was given orders, classified as "Secret", to move to an unspecified overseas location. The only hint we got for our destination was that we were issued jungle boots with mesh tops.

Everyone in my company was given a Christmas leave. I drove to Philadelphia for 48 hours with 5 other guys jammed into an old Ford. By a great stroke of fortune, while I was home I reunited with a former girlfriend who eventually became my wife (Cathy). When I got back to Texas, our whole company boarded a military version of a Boeing 707 and flew to Hawaii for a 24 hour layover. A couple of other guys and I rented a car and toured the island of

## Stories from Wild Bill

Oahu. The next stop was Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, where we were treated to a steak dinner and a lot of inspirational speeches. Where the hell were we heading and what were we going to do there? We took off and a few hours later landed in total darkness on a concrete landing strip in the jungle near Korat, Thailand. Meanwhile, our sister Engineer Battalion had been designated as combat engineers and were in Viet Nam along with about 20,000 “advisors”. We arrived on New Year’s Eve and settled into our primitive camp with its 6 man hootches with tin roofs and thatched siding. This was home for almost all of 1963. Our company was charged with completing the construction of an equipment depot and building a road and an ammunition dump. I was given many jobs including commo chief, company librarian, mail clerk, operations clerk, and acting operations sergeant (for which I received a commendation). While doing library organization, I found and read several white papers concerning the counter insurgency in Southeast Asia. I found that John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower’s Secretary of State, and his “domino theory” had caused the U.S. to become part of SEATO, which obligated us to come to the aid of Viet Nam, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Burma, if they were threatened by communism. Here were the seeds of our involvement in the war in Viet Nam. For Thailand, the plan was that if the communist forces crossed the Laos/Thailand border, friendly forces would fall back on a controlled retreat to Korat.

## Stories from Wild Bill

Meanwhile, troops would fly in and equip and arm themselves in the depot and join the battle. This was the reason that we were in Thailand.

As commo chief, I had installed a radio receiver in my hootch, shared with 5 other guys in the headquarters contingent. In November 1963 we got word of President Kennedy's assassination on Armed Forces Radio. We felt far, far away from the U.S., and of course we were.

On December 23, I got on an ancient Kiwi (New Zealand Air Force) plane for the hop to Bangkok. There I boarded a military charter that stopped at Tan Son Nhat airport in Viet Nam for a couple of hours layover. I was amazed at the amount of military activity on the tarmac and the numerous helicopters flying overhead. It was clearly a major operation. Our plane then flew to San Francisco. We were supposed to land at Travis Air Force Base, but fog caused us to be diverted. Six of us had to wait overnight in a dark airport for a morning flight. On Christmas Eve, we boarded an almost empty commercial flight to Philadelphia. Before we crossed the Continental Divide, we had drunk the plane out of beer, to the awe of the stewardesses. Obviously, our drinking training in the NCO club in Korat had paid off. I made it home for Christmas. I had to be very careful in my choice of words during conversations. I had just spent a year in a remote outpost with a bunch of other young men whose

## Stories from Wild Bill

language was extremely salty. The joke among returning troops was about the first dinner home with the family when a soldier would say, “Hey mom, pass the f\*\*\*ing salt!”

I was assigned to my last duty station at Fort Dix, NJ. My duty in Thailand was considered “hardship duty”, so I was allowed to choose my next assignment. I thought that it would be interesting to serve in Germany for my last 8 months, so I asked for and received that assignment. Fort Dix was the debarkation point for Europe, so my orders would route me that way. Because the normal tour in Europe was 18 months, I was required to sign an Intent to Re-enlist in order to be shipped overseas. I was scheduled to get out of the Army in mid-September and I wanted to attend Villanova University for the fall semester, starting in late September. I worried that I would be detained in Germany and lose a semester of college, so I refused to sign the Intent to Re-enlist. Consequently, I lost my chance to go to Germany and had to stay at Fort Dix. I was assigned to a STRAC MP battalion. “STRAC” means “Strategic Army Corps” and “MP” means “Military Police.” So I was going to be in a contingent of cops who had to keep their bags packed to travel anywhere in the world on 24 hour notice. Since I was a radio man, I was assigned to the commo hut, where we made minor repairs to the radios on the Jeeps used by the MP patrols. These were the same radios I had used in my last assignment, so I knew how to fix the most

## Stories from Wild Bill

common problems, usually bad vacuum tubes. I was also used as a police dispatcher, the most interesting part of the job. I had to communicate with the MPs patrolling in Jeeps via the military radio system and also talk to another set of patrol vehicles via a police band radio, using a whole different lingo, including the “10” codes now used by CB radios. I had a close shave at the end of my service: a couple of days after I was honorably discharged, my battalion was sent to patrol in Saigon. I always wondered if I would have had to go to Viet Nam if the order had come a few days earlier.

I came out of the Army feeling that everyone should be required to do some equivalent national service in order to fully function as a citizen, including the right to vote. I still feel that way.

I worry that too few of our local, state, and national leaders are military veterans. Lack of service means lack of understanding, and that detachment causes bad decisions for war and peace. I think that veterans can be a powerful political force and should be better organized.

Two years ago I participated in a 5K running race called “Chad’s Run.” Before the race started, we were all given plastic replicas of Chad Clifton’s dog tag to wear while we were running. Afterward, I bought the book, *A Random Soldier*, written by Chad’s mother Terri and composed of writings of Chad and Terri

## Stories from Wild Bill

as Chad grew up, joined the Marines, and served and died in Iraq. It is a compelling and beautifully written book that helps to explain the thinking of our military in Iraq and Afghanistan. Other works that help me understand what's happening over there are the book War by Sebastian Junger (he also wrote The Perfect Storm), the documentary Restrepo, and the book Fearless about an elite Navy Seal, Adam Brown who died in Afghanistan. In all these works, the strong message is that our troops mainly try to take care of each other while they're in combat in the service of their country. Their bonds and love for each other and their patriotism are inspirational and should be a model for our civilian communities at home.

I am proud to fly the American flag and proud to have served in the armed forces of the United States of America. Whenever I see persons in uniform, I always try to thank them for their service. They are willing to die for us.

The first photo shows our company area in Thailand, where I lived for almost a year.

The second photo shows our outdoor theater, where I used the skills from junior high AV

Club to good use.

The third photo shows me at leisure outside of our hootch in Thailand.



## Stories from Wild Bill



**Our company street.**



**I often ran the movie projector in our outdoor theater.**

## Stories from Wild Bill



**Relaxing with a brew  
outside of our hootch.**

# What is your best relationship advice?



**E**ach give 75%.

## Stories from Wild Bill

# Which sports teams were you a fan of as a child?



I was a child in the Bay Area of San Francisco from 1940–52. I lived with my family in San Mateo, 30 minutes from San Francisco and 20 minutes from Stanford University. We were also 25 minutes away from the Cow Palace events center.

I remember attending the 49ers pro football team games in San Francisco. At that time, California didn't host any major league teams, but instead had the AAA Pacific Coast League. The local teams were the San Francisco Seals and the Oakland Acorns. I attended games for both teams. Joe DiMaggio and his brother Vince both played for San Francisco. I attended the Shamrocks ice hockey team games at the Cow Palace. I also watched the San Francisco Dons college basketball games there.

When I was a Cub Scout, I attended home games of the Stanford football team, and remember seeing legendary decathlete Bob

## Stories from Wild Bill

Mathias play halfback there. We also occasionally went to San Mateo High School football games.

In the late 40s, my neighbor across the street got a TV set. I used to watch a lot of TV with my friend Bob Gaddis. I remember watching USC football games and became a fan because I liked their fight song.

# What marathons have you completed?



I had only run one 10 mile race, as part of the Ocean Drive Marathon course, before my late son Bill invited me to compete in the 2010 Atlanta Marathon. Bill had bariatric surgery in 2008 and started to run in March, 2009 while visiting us in Naples, Florida. He and I joined my daughter Katie in July, 2009 to run the Avalon (NJ) 5 Mile race, his first race. I ran my first half marathon, the Half-Wit Half, in August, 2009. I ran my first “real” half marathon in Naples in January, 2010. Then, I ran the Hooters to Hooters half marathon in early March, 2010. Finally, I ran my first Marathon in Atlanta in mid-March, 2010, with a time of 4:59. My legs were trashed by Atlanta’s hills and I was disappointed with my performance although I finished 2nd in the 65-70 age group.

I decided that I wanted to run a flat marathon and registered for the 2011 Disney Marathon. Son Bill one-upped me by registering

## Stories from Wild Bill

for the Goofy Challenge (half marathon Saturday and marathon on Sunday). I decided that was too extreme for my taste and trained for the marathon. In November, 2010 I injured my calf and decided to power walk. As a challenge for myself, I registered for the Goofy Challenge as well. In January, 2011 I walked the half marathon in 3:01 and walked my second marathon in 6:02.

I needed to try again, so I registered for the 2012 Goofy Challenge. This time, my training went well and I finished my third marathon in 4:28, which was good enough for qualification for Boston, but too late for that registration. I finished 3rd in the 70-75 age group.

I had run the Detroit Marathon in a relay with my niece Julie in October, 2011 while finishing 2nd in my age group in the half marathon. For October, 2012, I decided to complete the Detroit Marathon in the relay and also as an individual. I finished my fourth marathon in 5:02.

I repeated the Detroit experience in October, 2013 and finished my fifth marathon in 4:50.

It doesn't count as a marathon, but, in October, 2014, I ran 50K in the Sloppy Cuckoo 12 hour in Philadelphia.

It doesn't count as a marathon, but, in October, 2014, I finished the Blues Cruise 50K in 7:21 in Reading, PA.



## Stories from Wild Bill

For January, 2015 I registered for the Dopey Challenge (5K Thursday, 10K Friday, half marathon Saturday, Marathon Sunday). I finished my sixth marathon in 4:46. I finished 3rd in the 70-75 age group.

I felt that I could do better, so I searched for another Florida marathon and registered for the Tomoka Marathon in Ormond Beach for March, 2015. I finished my seventh marathon in 4:45. I finished 1st in the 70-75 age group.

It doesn't count as a marathon, but, in October, 2015, I finished the Blues Cruise 50K in 7:43 in Reading, PA.

I ran the Rock n' Roll Las Vegas Marathon in November, 2015. I finished my eighth marathon in 5:17. I was 3rd in the 75-79 age group.

I ran the Goofy Challenge in January, 2016. I finished my ninth marathon in 6:20.

It doesn't count as a marathon, but, in September, 2016, I ran 50K in the Labor Pain 12 hour in Reading, PA. I finished 1st in the 70+ age group.

I ran the Dopey Challenge in January, 2017. I finished my tenth marathon in 6:44.

I ran the NYC Marathon in November, 2017. I finished my eleventh marathon in 5:51.

## Stories from Wild Bill

It doesn't count as a marathon, but, in September, 2018, I ran 50K in the Labor Pain 12 hour in Reading, PA.

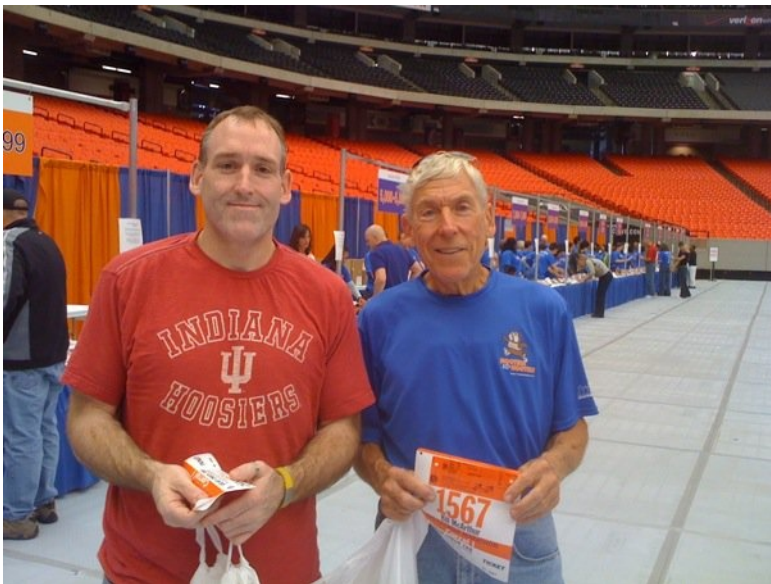
It doesn't count as a marathon, but, in September, 2019, I ran 50K in the Pemberton 24 hour in Salisbury, MD.

I ran the Dopey Challenge in January, 2022. I finished my twelfth marathon in 7:04.

Photo 1 shows Son Bill and I at packet pickup for our first marathon in 2010.

Photo 2 Son Bill and I with a friend on "Marathon Monday" in 2012.

Photo 3 shows me with my medal at the finish of the NYC marathon in 2017.



## Stories from Wild Bill



Stories from Wild Bill



# What jobs have you had?



**W**hen I was a little kid I tried to make money any way I could. I collected empty bottles and redeemed them for their deposits at the local supermarket. On weekends I would wander around the neighborhood trying to do odd jobs for people and get tips that way. One time, I offered to wax and polish wood floors by hand and had a bunch of interested people paying 25 cents per floor. I started a lawn mowing company with a friend when I was in 5th grade. We mowed and trimmed front or back lawns for 25 cents apiece.

As a teen I babysat for a neighbor down the street. I also shoveled snow when a good snowfall occurred. When I got my driver's license a day after my 16th birthday, I got a job at Penn Valley drugs, delivering prescriptions. I also served as a short-order cook at the fountain in Penn Valley drugs. When I was in high school, I worked one summer for Food Fair Markets. On another summer, I worked at the Philadelphia Chewing Gum Company, a

## Stories from Wild Bill

real sweat shop.

While in college, I worked as a lab technician on a cancer research project in the Radiology Department of UCLA Medical Center. Later that same summer, I worked a one man hot dog stand on the Steel Pier in Atlantic City. The summer before I enlisted in the Army, I drove a Yellow Cab in Philadelphia, one of my most interesting jobs.

When I got out of the Army, still in college, I did a stint as a Fuller Brush man, selling door-to-door. Later I secured a motor newspaper route. The summer after my junior year at Villanova, I doubled up my newspaper route with a job at EJ Corvette in the King of Prussia Mall as Accounts Receivables Clerk. The summer after I graduated from Villanova, I worked for Technical Services, a military contract company.

In graduate school at Penn State, I had a fellowship, but after I had finished my work, I taught two classes for an extra stipend. After receiving my Ph.D. I taught math and computer science at Shippensburg University for 27 years. During the summers of 1978-81, I worked at Raytheon Data Systems in Norwood, MA. While still at Shippensburg, I did computer software consulting as a partner in MC Systems, until I retired in 1996.

After retirement, I taught computer science for Richard Stockton College for three years. I also did some 1099 consulting. After

## Stories from Wild Bill

resigning from Stockton, I founded an LLC called Computing Doc which operated until 2010, when I finally quit working for money.

The first photo shows me in Thailand with the Army in 1963.

The second photo shows me in 1974 as a long-haired professor.

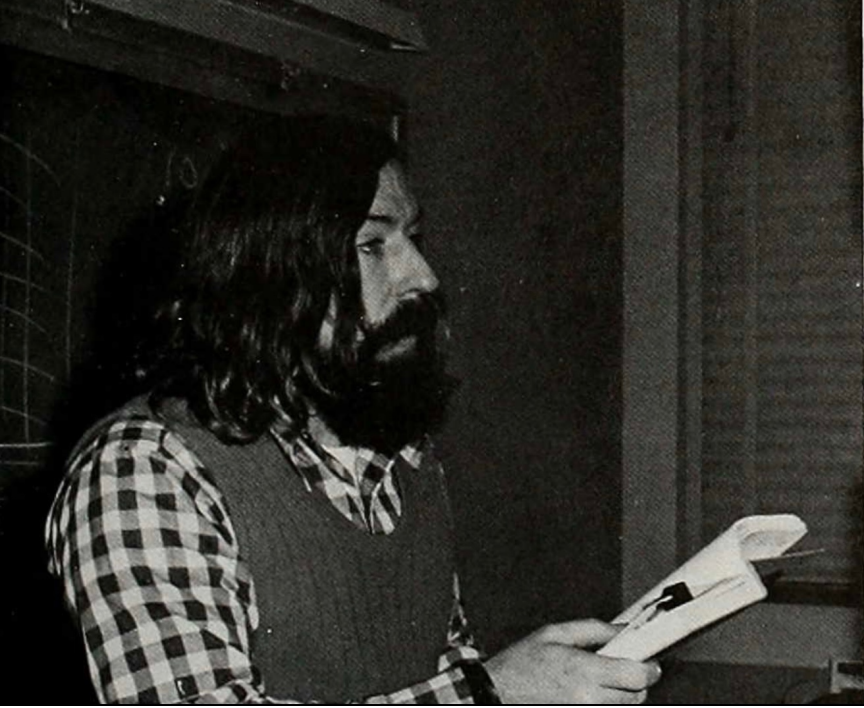
The third photo shows me in 1999 at the startup of Computing Doc LLC.



**Relaxing with a brew  
outside of our hootch.**



## Stories from Wild Bill





# Do you have any opinions?



**I**n my journals and trip reports, I usually stick to the facts and don't offer many opinions. Several years ago, someone told me that I should start to state my opinions on various subjects, so I started a blog, which I entitled, "Random Thoughts." I was very active for a while and then, more lately, have very rarely opined there. Here are four samples:

03/30/06 comments

Wow! I almost missed a month in my posting. It's hard to generate an excuse, since I don't work and there's plenty happening in the world worthy of comment; so I won't bother. As I write, the hot topic is "illegal immigrants", or "undocumented workers", depending on one's philosophy on the issue. I'll refer to them as "migrant workers" to try to discuss the matter objectively. Our son Bill thinks that an economic analysis should show that the migrant workers are a positive influence on the U.S. economy. However, there are many

## Stories from Wild Bill

reports that local communities are finding the costs outweighing the benefits. It's hard to argue with those that want to enforce border security, but we should all be working to alleviate the pressure on our border with Mexico. Something is terribly wrong when people on one side are proposing a wall of separation, and people on the other are literally dying to cross over. There are lots of lawful immigrants in the long process of naturalization; we have to be careful to be fair to them. There are lots of lawful taxpayers; we have to be careful to be fair to them. There are lots of racists; the hell with them. Some version of the proposed "guest worker" program is probably the best solution for the estimated 11 million migrant workers in the U.S. We need to eliminate the underground economy somehow, but it will need to be phased in so as not to shock the above ground economy. My main point is that we need to eliminate the emotional part of the discussion, so that the best program can be designed. One thing for sure, we all should learn to speak Spanish.

06/06/06 comments

On this devilish day, I'm thinking about George Bush's push for a ban on same-sex marriages. Let's think about the supposed sanctity of different-sex marriage. For example, how sacred are the unions of Jolie-Pitt, Holmes-Cruise, Latest-Trump? Without judging these folks in any way, these folks approach marriage in the same way as the dolphins that cavort in front of our house.

## Stories from Wild Bill

I'm not sure that we can do anything to weaken this "frivolous" end of the marriage spectrum. On the other end, we and several of our friends are blessed with unions of over 30 years. There is plenty of room in this continuum for other variations of the theme. In my neighborhood, many of the cohabitating couples (different sex) aren't married, by choice. With all of the evil that is taking place throughout the world, much of it caused by our country, why do we want to prevent good people from choosing to form legal unions? I think the answer lies in the evil that can come from organized religion. The devil has to love this situation.

01/07/08 comments

The weather is fabulous here in Naples. Today was sunny and the temperature hit 86 this afternoon.

I'm trying to weigh the wonderful weather versus the horrors of shopping with old people. OK, I'm a geezer, but my idea of shopping in a supermarket is to grab a good shopping cart with a recent lube job and round wheels and then tear up and down the aisles as if I'm on the GS Parkway, pushing people out of the way, knocking down those stupid little displays of stuff that act like speed bumps, get my groceries in a hurry, find the fastest cashier with the shortest line, race and beat the pregnant ladies to the line, pay and get out to my car where I use my cab driving skills to fly out of the lot with a bunch of shaking fists and

## Stories from Wild Bill

middle fingers in the windows of the honking cars behind me. I'm from Jersey, and I don't take prisoners when I have to shop. I discovered in the local Publix in Naples that things will be different for me here. First of all, about half of the other customers are driving those electric wheelchairs that I learned to love on my last couple of cruises on Holland America. Next, I found out that none of the other oldsters are in a hurry. They don't have a clear mission and they don't care how long they're going to be in the store. Also, if one of these QTips wants to get an item, or look at an item, on the left side of the aisle, she parks her cart, on an angle of course, on the left side of the aisle, creating even more slow motion havoc. I also noticed a couple of shoppers park their carts at the head of the aisle, not inside the aisle, and just sashay (slowly, naturally) into the aisle, to freelance. Don't these people know that there are rules? I also saw a couple of couples where the guy was on his electric scooter, totally out of it, not knowing where he was, probably soiling his diaper, and his wife was following with a shopping cart. It was like a glacial jack-knifing eighteen wheeler.

I don't know how I'm going to survive 9 weeks of this. The only good thing so far is that the other geezers seem to stay away from Starbucks, because they eschew caffeine for some reason, so I can be my Jersey rude self when I get my espresso drink of choice.

Pray for me.

## Stories from Wild Bill

01/05/09 comments

### Grandparenting

My seventh grandchild was just born on January 2. The first one was born in 1999. It's a lot easier to have grandkids than to have kids, mainly because you don't have to send them to college, but also because they don't live with you and it doesn't take any energy to beget them.

My grandchildren are spread out in three families. In each, a granddaughter was the firstborn and a grandson was the last born. I know the names of each of my grandchildren, but only approximately know their ages and don't know any of their birthdays, except for the recent one, and that will soon dim away.

I have featured grandkids on Christmas cards in 2005, 2006, and, belatedly, 2008. What happened to 2007? Well, I crossed the Equator in a ship, and that took precedence, at least in my mind. It's getting harder to bring all of the grandchildren together, but it is a very special event when it happens.

One of my grandsons has my name and another has it as his middle name. These honors are most precious to me.

I missed the births of two of the grandchildren, because they were born ahead of schedule. I was in Puerto Vallarta for one of them, and in Hawaii for the other. Not that I'm of much use when a grandchild is born, but I'm pretty good at running

## Stories from Wild Bill

errands, I'm fair at shopping, and I'm tolerable at taking orders. I was actually in the birthing room for the delivery of my first grandchild. I never had that experience with my own children, so I was pretty intimidated about the whole procedure. I huddled in the corner of the room and tried to maintain a side view of the proceedings, but it was awesome to be present. The other four births were covered other reports.

When my daughter and her new baby, encapsulated in a space-age infant seat, were about to get into the car for the ride home, I mentioned to her that she rode home from the hospital in her mother's arms and her mother didn't have a seat belt. Also, I told her that when she was born she already carried the egg for the new son.

I find it all pretty awesome.

The rest can be accessed via [CapeMayBeach.net](http://CapeMayBeach.net), menu item "Opinions."

The first photo shows the grandkids at our home on Cape May Beach in 2010.

The second photo shows the grandkids at Ocean City, MD in 2018.

The third photo shows the grandkids at Epcot in 2021.

## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Did you have any adventures as a kid?



**F**ireworks were illegal in the Bay Area of San Francisco when I grew up there. The word in school was that fireworks could be had in Chinatown in San Francisco. Supposedly, one could carry an empty paper bag and someone would offer fireworks for sale. A school chum and I decided to give it a try, so we packed up some paper bags, walked to the train station, and took the commuter train to San Francisco, about 30 minutes away. No one on the train seemed to wonder about us two sixth-graders riding the train unescorted. When we arrived at the city, we somehow found Chinatown and started to walk with our paper bags. It wasn't long before a Chinese man joined us on the sidewalk and asked if we wanted fireworks. We followed him into a store and he pulled out some fireworks from under the counter. We bought his goods and continued to "shop" at a couple of other stores. When our bags were full, we took the train back to San Mateo. On the way back from the train station, we lit firecrackers and other

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fireworks as we walked. We saw a kid that we knew from school and talked with him for a bit as we exploded our wares. Among our fireworks were some “repeaters”, which shot up in the air and exploded again. They were fun, so we lit some on the way home. When I got to my house, I sneaked in and hid the rest of my fireworks under my bed. The next thing I knew, my mother was calling me downstairs to the front door, where the Fire Marshall was standing. He told me that we had set someone’s lawn on fire with a repeater. When the fire truck had arrived on the scene, the kid we had talked with ratted me out. The Fire Marshall confiscated the rest of the fireworks, ending the (mis)adventure.

The photo shows the guys in the family at Mount Rushmore on the way across country after my sixth grade year - left-to-right: my father, my brother Jack, me, and my brother Bob.

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# What are your politics?



**A** Republican's Manifesto - William G. McArthur April 3, 2017

This is not my father's Republican Party, nor mine either. He wouldn't have recognized it, even as I don't. He brought me up, hammering into me that FDR's New Deal was evil incarnate, and that the Democrats wanted to give away his hard-earned money. My dad graduated as an Electrical Engineer from Penn State in 1929. He migrated from Altoona, PA, where he grew up, to Brooklyn in order to get away from his coal-dusty, bleak-futured hometown. There was no work to be had, so he set up his own oil recycling plant under the Brooklyn Bridge, purchased an old truck, and eked out a living for a few years. He finally got the job he deserved and started working up the corporate ladder. He was a self-made man and felt that no one deserved a free lunch.

When Pat Brown was running as a Democrat for California Attorney General in 1950, I was a 10 year-old living in San

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Mateo, California. I was always looking for a way to make a buck and worked for a day distributing leaflets for Pat Brown. At the end of the day, when I told my father what I had accomplished, he said, "But he's a Democrat!" I felt bad about that, and worse when Brown was elected.

I was 20 when Nixon ran against Kennedy. I would have voted for Nixon if I could have. I served in the Army from 1961-1964 and served for a year in Thailand in 1963. I was there when we heard on Armed Forces Radio that Kennedy had been assassinated. When I finally could vote in 1964, I voted, as a Republican, for Barry Goldwater, whom I thought of as a hero. In 1968, I was finally able to vote for Nixon.

I thought that Nixon was a great president. He led a smart foreign policy, he proposed healthcare for Americans, and he started the Environmental Protection Agency. I voted for Nixon again in 1972. If not for Watergate, he would be considered one of the best.

I voted for Gerald Ford in 1976. I thought that the Ford/Dole ticket was one of the best ever. Both of them were among the best of men. I voted for Reagan in 1980 and 1984. I voted for George H.W. Bush in 1992 and 1996. I voted for George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004, although I had a bad feeling about Dick Cheney and his influence. I was in Spain for four months, immersing myself in Spanish, when the Iraq War started in 2003.



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I was in many Spanish cities on weekends where the citizens were demonstrating against the war. From over there, no justification for that war was evident.

Through all of those years I could stand tall as an American patriot, veteran, and Republican. One of the people that I most admired was John McCain, a war hero and long-time Senator. I remember writing him about my admiration of him as a man and a politician.

Something bad happened during the run-up to the 2008 election, as John McCain's Evil Twin emerged from the Party being hi-jacked by a radical faction spawned by greed, mean-spiritedness, bigotry, and ignorance. I could no longer associate myself with my Party, now personified by Sarah Palin, and I switched to the Green Party, which had some ideas I could believe in.

My father turned over in his grave when I voted for Obama in the 2008 election. When Obama turned out to be a good person and great orator, but came up a bit short of achievement, and Romney chose the Dark Side of the party, I voted Green in 2012. The Green Party showed itself to be radical in a different way.

In 2016, the Party was even crazier, so I voted for Clinton, wholly on the basis of her gender.

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Post-election, in 2017, I felt as a man without a party. I decided to return to my roots and change my registration back to Republican. However, I find it hard to stand tall and be a proud Party member. I want my Party to return to its roots, too! I'm going to try to help.

# What do you know about your ancestry?



**M**y DNA profile from Ancestry.com shows:

Ireland 50%

England & Northwestern Europe 23%

Scotland 22%

Wales 5%

My surname comes from Clan MacArthur in the Highlands of Scotland, headquartered near Loch Awe, where there are ruins of a castle. Our branch of the McArthur family in America began with my 3rd great grandfather Daniel McArthur, who emigrated to Philadelphia from Scotland in 1789?. My 2nd great grandfather John remained in Philadelphia, but his son, my great grandfather Thomas moved to Altoona, PA with my grandfather John. My father John left Altoona after he graduated from Penn State in 1929.

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My mother's maiden name is Monahan. She was born in Brooklyn, NY, which had a large Irish community. Her family in America began with my 2nd great grandfather Christopher, who emigrated to New York from Ireland in 1849.

My paternal grandmother, Bertha Houser, was from the Pennsylvania Dutch community.

My grandfather John took me to see the cornerstone of Philadelphia City Hall when I was a teen. He told me that the architect, John McArthur was his uncle, but I have been unable to establish the familial connection.

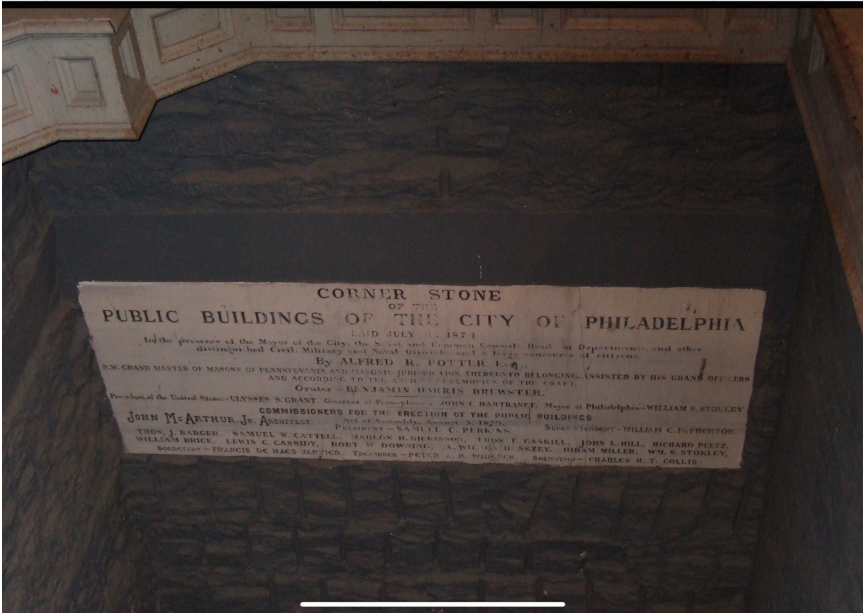
My father had a brother Bill who is my namesake. My mother had a sister Helen and two brothers, Christopher and Alfred. My mother, her father, and all of her siblings died from alcoholism.

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Cathy's Uncle Dick, Cathy's Mother, Cathy, me, my Mother, and my Father.

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The cornerstone of Philadelphia City Hall.

## Stories from Wild Bill



My father, my sister Joan, my paternal grandfather, my mother along the back. In front, my paternal and maternal grandmothers.

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My father, my sister Joan, me, my mother, my uncle Bill, my brother Bob, and my aunt Ginny.



# What is your medical history?



I was born in the West Hudson Memorial Hospital in Kearny, NJ with a nice view across the river on July 1, 1940.

I had my tonsils out when I was a little kid, about 4 years old and had to stay overnight by myself in a hospital in San Mateo, CA. I remember going under with ether.

I had weak ankles and suffered frequent sprains over the years until I started running in 1977.

In the fall of 1983 I ran a 10K race as part of the Homecoming activities at Shippensburg University (PA). I was wearing a pair of Nike sneakers that were more suited for tennis than running. I ran a fairly good pace of just under 8 minutes per mile. For about a month following the race, I had some mild pain and redness of the side of the joint of my left great toe. I mainly noticed the pain in the morning and thought that perhaps I had a stress fracture.

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In the spring of 1985 I was playing kickball with my children in the playground of James Burd Elementary School in Shippensburg. I was playing barefoot on the asphalt surface of the playing field. As I went to give the ball a hard kick with my right foot, I stubbed my great toe. I think that I waited a couple of days to check to see if I had broken the swollen and painful toe by showing up at the Emergency Room of the Chambersburg (PA) Hospital. The doctor that handled my case looked at my purple toe and said, "You have gout." An X-ray showed that I didn't have a break, so I accepted the diagnosis and used the prescribed Indocin to reduce the inflammation. I researched gout and discovered that it was a form of arthritis. I felt that there should be a dietary solution to my new problem. I purchased a copy of *New Hope for the Arthritic* by Dr. Colin Dong. The author proposed a fairly rigorous dietary approach, which was similar to a macrobiotic diet. My foot pain was horrible, so I was ready to try anything. At that time I was very much engaged in physical fitness, but I was a big meat eater and a moderate to heavy drinker. I immediately took meat out of my diet and strove for a low-sodium, low-fat philosophy for eating. I put myself on a bread and water diet until the acute gout attack was over. Gout stayed away for a while as I lost weight and adopted an increasingly radical dietary approach coupled with an increasingly radical exercise regime. I gave up coffee and other caffeinated beverages. My fluid intake was restricted to water

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and herbal tea. I had an acute attack sometime in the late 80s while vacationing in Boston. I went to a medical clinic in Wellesley for help. While in the clinic, a urologist stuck a needle in my toe and determined that I definitely had uric acid crystals in my joint. Finally, in the fall of 1989, I gave up alcohol as well. In the summer of 1990, following a six-day backpacking trip where I maintained a foolishly low hydration level, I had an acute gout attack on my great toe (I'm not sure which foot). Subsequently, I had a couple of gout attacks per year on various joints of my legs. For a while I tried a strict low purine diet.

In 1993 I broke my collarbone while biking with Cathy. I went by ambulance to the Chambersburg hospital. Shortly thereafter, we went to Laval University in Quebec City for a total immersion French program. I was very limited in what I could do physically and concentrated on walking and hiking.

Events leading to Kidney surgery:

- (10/27/2001) After a six-mile run, I noticed tea colored urine which suggested blood to me. I called and visited Dr. Maroldo who arranged a urinalysis at Burdette-Tomlin Hospital in Cape May Court House, NJ for that afternoon. I had no more incidents of suspicious-looking urine.

- (12/03/2001) I had a CAT scan for my kidneys at Community Radiology in Cape May Court House. Dr. Maroldo had arranged for the test when the earlier culture urinalysis had come back

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negative.

- (12/06/2001) Dr. Maroldo had me in for a visit after receiving the report from Community Radiology: “Severe left hydronephrosis, most likely due to a stone obstruction in the ureteropelvic junction.” We arranged for an appointment with a urologist.

- (12/12/2001) I visited Dr. Schutz of Somers Point Urology Associates, bringing my film from Community Radiology. Dr. Schutz prescribed four blood tests, a urinalysis, and an IVP (Intravenous Pyelogram). I immediately went to Shore Memorial Hospital and got the blood and urine tests. I made an appointment for the IVP.

- (12/17/2001) I had the IVP at Shore Memorial Hospital. The several X-rays were taken from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

- (12/21/2001-12/31/2001) Holiday trip. I kept my fluids up, but had many dinners out, including four days of eating seafood and shrimp in Savannah, GA at the end of the trip. In Savannah, I did a lot of walking.

- (01/02/2002) I went to Shore Memorial Hospital for pre-admission testing. I had two chest X-rays, an EKG, five blood tests, and a urinalysis. I brought my films from the IVP to Dr. Schutz for a visit. Dr. Schutz discussed the impending procedure and told me that I had an elevated PSA which suggested a prostate biopsy should be done later. Sometime during the day I noticed a gout attack on my left great toe.

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- (01/04/2002) My gouty toe was acute overnight and I couldn't take any anti-inflammatory due to this morning's procedure. I went to Shore Memorial Hospital. Dr. Schutz performed a cystoscopy and inserted a stent while I was under a general anesthetic. For about 24 hours after the procedure, urination decreasingly burned and my urine was decreasingly rusty colored.

- (01/10/2002) My gouty left toe continued to be acute. It was swollen and painful. I'd been treating it with a low purine diet, fresh cherries, ibuprofen, Aleve, and over 72 ounces of daily drinking water. As part of the low purine diet, I ceased drinking coffee, and other caffeinated beverages.

- (01/14/2002) My left foot was very close to normal. I started to engage in aerobics and cycling.

- (01/16/2002) After the evening aerobics class, I detected some blood in my urine which continued for three urinations before ceasing.

- (01/21/2002) Cathy and I visited Dr. Schutz. We went over my questions. Dr. Schutz said that it is his opinion that my left kidney condition is congenital. He said the incident of 01/16/2002 was probably just a slippage of the stent and of no consequence. I could continue my exercise program. Also Dr. Schutz prescribed Allopurinol for my gout problem; he hoped that it would also help dissolve the stones in my left kidney. Because my PSA was 4.8 on the last blood test, he wanted to

## Stories from Wild Bill

biopsy my prostate. Also he wanted another IVP in four weeks. My urine pH was 7.0 at the time of the visit.

- (01/22/2002) I ran 3.5 miles to the gym and did an aerobics class. Afterwards, I had a lot of blood in my urine for a couple of hours. I decided to forgo running and aerobics until the stent is removed.

- (01/26/2002) My left big toe got an acute gout attack. I had read that Allopurinol causes more frequent gout attacks during the first six months. I started taking Aleve.

- (01/28/2002) I stopped taking Aleve since my foot was better.

- (02/12/2002) I ran 3.5 miles to the gym and suffered no bleeding afterward.

- (02/14/2002) I had another IVP at Shore Memorial Hospital. The several X-rays were taken from 8:00 AM to 9:50 AM.

- (02/18/2002) Cathy and I visited Dr. Schutz. He read the IVP report to me (which basically showed no progress). He said that the next step is a renal scan. He gave us three possible outcomes for the kidney: open surgery to remove the stones; endoscopy to remove the stones; or, removal of the kidney. Dr. Schutz wants to see how much function the renal scan will show for my left kidney.

- (02/22/2002) I had a Prostate biopsy at 1:00 PM, which was negative.

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- (02/26/2002) I had a renal scan at Shore Memorial Hospital from 9:30 AM to 10:00 AM.

- (03/04/2002) I visited Dr. Schutz at 2:15 PM. To my surprise, he told me that, on the basis of the renal scan, my two kidneys act about the same! He described an open operation which requires 5 or 6 days in the hospital. He said that the doctors in Philadelphia have fancier tools available and referred me to Dr. Bagley at Jefferson Hospital to discuss an “endopyelotomy”. One of the receptionists set me up with an appointment for 1:00 PM on April 9.

- (04/09/2002) I visited Dr. Bagley at Jefferson Hospital in Philadelphia at 1:00 PM. He said that the stones in my left kidney were calcium and won't dissolve. He wanted me to schedule a CT angiogram to check for crossing vessels at the left ureto-pelvic junction in preparation for any operation. Then he wanted me to see Dr. Strup of Jefferson to discuss a pyeloplasty.

- (04/16/2002) I had a CT angiogram at Shore Memorial Hospital at 2:00 PM.

- (05/13/2002) Cathy and I visited with Dr. Strup of Jefferson Hospital at 10:30 AM. He had read my materials and viewed my test results. He recommended the laprascopic pyeloplasty and indicated that the safe time for the stent will expire in July. We scheduled the operation for July 11.

- (06/26/2002) I had Pre-admission testing at Jefferson Hospital at 11:00 AM, where the nurse noted that I had

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Bradycardia (low pulse).

- (07/16/2002) I underwent a Laparoscopic pyeloplasty operation by Dr. Strup at Jefferson Hospital.

- (08/19/2002) I had two tests at Shore Memorial Hospital for: Renal Ultrasound and KuB X-ray.

- (08/26/2002) Cathy and I visited Dr. Strup at Jefferson Hospital for my six week post-op check-up and stent removal.

I had experienced a recurring calf problem while running since 1977. An attack interrupted my training for the Goofy Challenge of 2011 and cause me to walk both the half and full marathons.

Events prior to and subsequent from ear surgery to remove a basal cell carcinoma from my left ear:

10/22/18

Cathy and I had reserved an Uber for 5:00am. When it hadn't arrived by 5:10am, in spite of my texting the driver three times, I sent a final text to cancel the ride and implemented Plan B. We drove our Toyota to Milford Hospital in Delaware and checked-in. We sat in the Day Surgery lounge for a while and then were brought into our room. I was set up with heart monitor wires and met the doctors and nurses that would be involved in the surgery to remove two basal cell carcinomas from my left ear. While I was hearing about anesthesia, one of the staff pointed to a monitor and said, "You have a Wenckebach heart block."



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More staff took a couple of EKGs, one twice as long as the other. They told me to see a cardiologist as soon as possible and gave Cathy the longer EKG to bring along. Meanwhile, the anesthesiology nurse told me that I'd have to have slightly different anesthesia, changed from Propofol to a twilight zone drug. I was disappointed, since I have had Propofol a few times and like the way it works.

I was wheeled into the OR and put into Lala Land. I could hear voices all through the surgery, but didn't recognize any words. I felt no pain, but I felt pressure on my head when a protective device looking like an athletic cup was Velcroed tightly around my head. As I became more aware, Cathy and I talked with Dr. Malek, the surgeon, and some other staff. I was set up for an appointment a week later to have the sutures removed. I was told to wait to 48 hours to take a shower and remove the cup from my ear.

When I seemed recovered, a nurse asked us how we were getting home and we told her that we were taking Uber, although I wanted to see if I could drive first. The nurse told me to summon an Uber driver and then wheeled us out of the door and placed me in the Uber. Once home, we rested, had dinner, watched our shows, and hit the hay. I took Tylenol for the pain.

10/23/18

We slept-in a bit and had a leisurely breakfast. About mid-morning, we summoned an Uber to take us to Milford

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Hospital to pick up the Toyota, which had spent the night there. Plan B had worked well and we got back home safely and in time for lunch. Dr. Malek had told me not to run a half marathon on Saturday, October 27, for fear of bleeding, so I took it easy the rest of the day and took Tylenol for the pain, although I worried about the possible liver damage that could result from exceeding 4000mg in a day.

10/24/18

After breakfast and some Tylenol, I took a shower and then removed the “cup” and the bloody bandages therein. I saw that there were some yellow bandages inside and atop my ear. I texted a photo to Dr. Malek and asked if I should leave the bandages in place. Dr. Malek called and said that the bandages should wash away in the shower and suggested that I switch to Advil for inflammation and pain. Also, my ear hurt and was dripping some bloody liquid. I drove Cathy to a hair dressing appointment. We went to the store in the afternoon and chilled out the rest of the day. I took some Advil to help sleep.

10/25/18

I drove Cathy to Dr. Aponte’s office for a late morning appointment. We went out for dinner with our friends John and Diane Hartnett and treated Big Fish to the sight of my ear. After dinner, John and Diane joined us at our home for some conversation and goodbyes, since we were due to take the Autotrain on Halloween. I took some Advil to help sleep.

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10/26/18

After breakfast, we spent some time organizing things on the dining room table for our trip south. I took a shower and futilely attempted to wash the yellow bandages off of my ear. Our daughter Alex and granddaughter Bridget arrived in late afternoon for a quick visit. The four of us had a nice dinner at Michy's. When we returned home, we facetedimed with our son Bill and daughter-in-law Stacey. Then, Cathy was presented with a gorgeous quilt, in a bookshelf motif, that had pictures of each of our children's family, and several books that are meaningful to Cathy. The quilt was created by Stacey's cousin. More Advil helped sleep.

10/27/18

After breakfast, we four went to the Seaside outlet for some shopping for Bridget. Then we went to the nearby Iron Hill Brewery for lunch. Alex and Bridget departed in early afternoon. We spent the rest of the day packing our things for the trip south. More Advil helped sleep.

10/28/18

After breakfast, I made a trip to Walgreen's to pick up some cream to put on my ear. We spent some more time packing. The next morning, on Monday, I was scheduled to get the sutures removed from my ear. I was feeling under-exercised, so I went out for an easy two mile walk and went downstairs for a very abbreviated weights and abs workout. We had our usual pizza

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dinner, but I drove to takeout at Grotto Pizza instead of walking as usual in order to avoid overdoing the exercise in deference to my ear. We watched shows during and after dinner as usual and headed to bed shortly after nine. I took a couple of Advils right before dinner.

Now things are going to get weird. I settled down around 9:30pm, lay on my right side and placed my right ear on the pillow, and drifted toward sleep. As I entered dreamland, I had an irrational thought that I needed to breath in a certain pattern and cadence, or there would be dire consequences. I roused myself and said to Cathy, still reading, "I feel confused." I sat at the edge of the bed to gather myself. I checked myself to see if I had had a stroke by remembering my name, date of birth, social security number, and Army service number. I scored 100%, but recalled the information at about half speed. In fact, my vision was about half bright. I got up and walked to the dining room, at about half speed. I splayed myself in a chair, something I never do, and told Cathy, "This is not normal." Cathy told me that she was calling 911 and she did. I got up, slowly walked to the door, opened it a bit, and turned on the outside light. Then I went back to my chair. When the EMTs arrived, they introduced themselves, asked me how I was, and took my vital signs. I wasn't very interested, but I described myself as half conscious. They asked if I could walk outside; I said that I could and I did, slowly. I sat on a gurney and was loaded in one of the two

## Stories from Wild Bill

ambulances that had arrived. Again, I wasn't very interested, but I knew what was going on. As I lay in the moving ambulance, I thought, "I won't look back on this as silly." I knew that this trip was necessary. When we arrived at Beebe Hospital, we were taken to a room in the ER and I was hooked up to various equipment. I remember hearing about low pulse and, at some point mentioned that I have a resting pulse of 42bpm because I'm a runner. I was wheeled into another room for a test and I recognized the CAT scan machine. Only my head was scanned because they suspected a stroke. I was quickly cleared of stroke suspicion, and my heart block and my pulse rate seemed to be the issues of concern. I was still half conscious, medically called "near syncope." Cathy and I sat for a long time, holding hands and talking a bit. I felt very calm and ready to accept any outcome, although I felt bad for Cathy if things didn't go well for me. About 3 hours after arriving at the ER, I became fully conscious. I first realized it when the room brightened to 100%. I was admitted as a cardiac case and a potential recipient of a pacemaker. We finally arrived at room 535b, a double room, at about 3:00am. The rest of the night was filled with EKGs, blood pressure tests, and other checks on my condition. Cathy tried to sleep in a chair, but that was tough going. I rested, but didn't sleep. My pulse rate bottomed out at 25bpm during the night. I had de-fib pads attached, paddles were right at the foot of my bed, and there were atropine needles taped to the bed near my

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head. The floor nurse told me a bit later that they were all “freaked out” because no one had ever had that low of a heart rate at their station. During the day, I met nurses and three cardiologists. I had an echo cardiogram to assess my heart’s functioning. A nurse drew some pictures on a white board in the room and explained that my heart was pumping effectively, it was getting enough blood for its health, but the electrical system in my heart was defective: hence the heart block (skipped beats). During the day, the doctors seemed to think that I needed a pacemaker, and might receive on the next day. They told me about a tiny pacemaker that can be inserted into the heart via a blood vessel in the groin. During late morning, I had a small package of Cheerios and coffee for breakfast. I had a bowl of fruit and water for lunch. Our friend Bern Ernakovich drove over to visit and to drive Cathy home to pick up her meds. They returned a bit later to spend the afternoon with me. I continued to be closely monitored. A pair of PT staff arrived to take me on a walk around the floor. During late afternoon, Bern and Cathy left. I enjoyed a PB&J sandwich and water. What followed was a long, long night. I caught up on my sleep and then some.

10/30/18

I had to fast from midnight due to a scheduled stress test with nuclear dye. Dr. Islam, the electrical specialist visited me early in the morning. He said that he thought that I didn’t need a pacemaker, but the stress test would be decisive. Later, I talked

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with the other two cardiologists on my case, who concurred with Dr. Islam. One of the cardiologists, a woman, had done the Bethany Beach Triathlon with me in 2015. My assigned cardiologist from the team was Dr. Pena. He talked with me most often.

Cathy and Bern arrived mid-morning. We all waited until about 10:30am, when I was wheeled out for the stress test. The first part of the stress test was an injection of a nuclear dye and a very boring wait for an hour, sitting in a wheel chair. I was encouraged to drink a large cup of water. Then, I lay down for a 15 minute scan. Next, I was walked into the treadmill room. There were two women who are Delaware runners assisting. I had a fun time chatting about running, how I was a week out of shape, about running shoes, and use of the Child's Pose for knee problems. A fourth cardiologist was in control of the treadmill, reading an EKG on the screen. The test was to bring my heart rate up to 120bpm, around the calculated maximum heart rate for a 78 year old. There was a lot of chatter as we worked on getting my heart rate up. Finally, the doctor was satisfied. They ranked me number one for the day, making it a competition, and making me feel good. I asked the doctor if the heart block had disappeared during the exercise and he said that it did. I was injected with another nuclear dye and then walked back to my wheel chair in the waiting room. The highlight of the test came next: a large cup of black coffee and two packs of peanut butter

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crackers, an afternoon feast for someone who had been fasting since 5pm the previous night. I waited for an hour and then finished up with another 15 minute scan while on my back. I was wheeled back up to the fifth floor, where Cathy and Bern awaited. When I got back to the room, it was freshly made up. I sat on the bed to await the results. Bern went home and Cathy and I waited some more. Finally the results came back: I passed! The orders from Dr. Pena were for release with a heart monitor patch attached for a seven day test period. At the end of the test period, I had to mail the monitor to a site in California, where the data would be organized. Then, Dr. Pena would analyze the information and meet with me to discuss the next steps. Diana, the incredible floor nurse and vegan, attached the heart patch and explained how to use it to log various events. Cathy called Bern, Diana WALKED me out, and we were done with the hospital stay. We got home around dinner time, so we ate and watched our shows as usual. We were both ready for bed early.

10/31/18

We went shopping. My logging events were a weights and crunches workout and a 5K recovery run. We had already cancelled the Autotrain that we were supposed to be on this day. I got in touch with Chase to make a claim for a refund of the \$250 cancellation fee imposed by Amtrak.

11/01/18



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We awoke to find that the Internet didn't work, due to us being on a seasonal suspension starting that day. I spent a long time on the phone with Comcast getting a month extension of the start of the seasonal hold. It took about six hours for the Internet to come back on. My logging events were a 5K training run and a minute of dizziness as I typed this document.

11/02/18

My logging events were a weights and crunches workout and an easy 5K run.

11/03/18

I took a day off from running and weights and crunches work. At noon I met with Dr. Malek to get the sutures removed from my left ear. He told me that the area was slightly infected due to getting the sutures out late (I was in the hospital when they were supposed to be removed). He prescribed an anti-bacterial ointment and an antibiotic pill. We stopped at ACME to get the pills and ointment and headed home. I took a shower and was helped by a neighbor in applying the ointment for the first time.

11/04/18

This was Cathy's Birthday. I finished Cathy's Birthday card on FaceBook and then showed it to Cathy. Afterward, I went out for a 5K walk, a 5K run, and a 5K walk. I logged the run. After lunch, I logged a weights and crunches workout in the basement. After lunch I took a shower and then we shopped at the outlets to get Cathy's Birthday presents.

## Stories from Wild Bill

11/05/18

I took another day off from exercise since it rained all day.

11/06/18

I logged a weights and crunches workout and an easy 10K run. I pulled off the heart monitor patch around 3:30pm and luckily caught the mailman and mailed it with him. Now the wait.

11/12/18

I had an appointment with Dr. Malek for my ear. He suggested a skin graft, to be scheduled within the next few days in Wilmington. We accepted our daughter Alex's invitation for Thanksgiving.

11/13/18

Chrystal, from Dr. Malek's office called and set up a skin graft procedure in Newark (DE) for 12:40pm Thursday, 11/15.

11/14/18

Dr. Pena's office called during late afternoon to tell me that the results from the heart monitor patch were in and that I needed to come to the office at 9:15 tomorrow. There was a sense of urgency in the caller's voice.

11/15/18

I called Dr. Malek's office to cancel the procedure scheduled for this afternoon, due to the weather forecast and the cardiology appointment. I had a 9:15am appointment at Clinic-by-the-sea in Lewes. We met with Joanna Robertson, the triathlete nurse that we met in the hospital stay at Beebe. She said that the Zio

## Stories from Wild Bill

patch heartrate monitor results were “alarming” (not the word we wanted to hear). She said that my heartrate went into the 20s, that I showed a couple of other types of heart block, and that my heartrate dropped to 0 a couple of times, once for 4.6 seconds. She said that a pacemaker would be necessary and that Dr. Pena and Dr. Islam were coordinating as a team, as they were in the hospital. The office set up an appointment with Dr. Islam for tomorrow at 11:00am and a follow-up appointment with Dr. Pena (and maybe Dr. Islam) in Millsboro on December 3rd at 10:15am. So now we had to wait.

11/16/18

We arrived early (as usual) for the appointment with Dr. Islam in his Lewes office. The small waiting room was filled with the aged and infirm with their canes, walkers, and wheelchairs. I felt a bit out of place here, although I am aged and maybe infirm. When we finally got to see Dr. Islam, he asked some questions, looked at test results and said, “I don’t see any problem. Your heart beats slowly when you are sleeping. You do not need a pacemaker.” I was jumping for joy inside, because I had been researching all morning about pacemakers and various activities and didn’t like the implications. Dr. Islam thought that I should do a sleep test, just to see, but otherwise we’re done until May. I called Dr. Malek’s office when we got home to try to see him once more before we were to head south on Thanksgiving Day on the Auto Train. I had to leave a message. I decided to let my ear

## Stories from Wild Bill

heal by itself and see someone in Florida if needed.

11/19/18

The best laid plans... I called Dr. Malek's office at 8am and asked for him to look at my ear once again. I got an appointment for 9am. When Dr. Malek looked at my ear, he said that the area he was concerned with had only healed by about 10% in the past week. Since I didn't want to deal with a drippy ear for 9 more weeks, I agreed to get a skin graft right away. The procedure lasted about an hour. After discussions with Dr. Malek and his assistant Julie, I decided to have Dr. Malek remove the sutures and stent the next Monday. So that meant canceling another train ride and mail forwarding. It's deja vu all over again. I decided not to guess when we could schedule another train. We called our daughter Alex and said that we were on again for Thanksgiving, the silver lining in the delay. Since my ear was all bandaged, I sent Cathy into ACME to get my antibiotic prescription: 5 days with a pill at 5:30 and 11:30 around the clock. I put all of the pill times on our Google calendar so that my Apple Watch would tell me when to take the next pill. Julie had told me not to get the ear wet, so I started a regimen of baths and wipes.

11/26/18

Dr. Malek removed the sutures from my ear at 8am. He cleared me for travel and would like to see me again in May. I picked up a copy of the Zio Patch report from Dr. Pena's office and a copy of my Stress Test report from Medical Records at Beebe Hospital. I

## Stories from Wild Bill

planned to see a cardiologist in Naples.

12/10/18

I met with another cardiologist, Dr. Sharma of Naples Community Hospital. I presented him with all of the information that I had compiled. He concluded that there wasn't any problem.

## Stories from Wild Bill

# Travel: Trips



**T**he details of each of these trips can be found via the “Trips” menu on [CapeMayBeach.net](http://CapeMayBeach.net).

## Transcontinental 1984

Mexico

United States

## Europe 1985

France

Italy

Switzerland

United Kingdom (England)

## British Isles 1989

Ireland

United Kingdom (Scotland)

United Kingdom (Wales)

## Greece 1990

Greece

## Stories from Wild Bill

Norway 1990

Norway

25th Anniversary Cruise 1991

French Polynesia

Down Under 1991

Australia

New Zealand

35th Anniversary in Venice 2001

Italy

Birthday in Aruba 2001

Aruba

4 Months in Spain 2003

Spain

United Kingdom (Gibraltar)

RV Caravan to Mexico 2004

Belize

Mexico

Europe 2004

Austria

Germany

Lichtenstein

Switzerland

RV Caravan to Mexico 2005

Mexico

Hawaii 2005



## Stories from Wild Bill

United States (Hawaii)

Panama Canal 2006

Aruba

Bahamas

Canada (Vancouver, B.C.)

Costa Rica

Panama

United States (Puerto Rico)

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

Brazil

Greece

Italy

Monaco

Portugal

Senegal

Spain

Turkey

United Kingdom (Gibraltar)

California 2007

United States (Yosemite)

Carnival Freedom 2008

Cayman Islands

Jamaica

Mexico

MSC Orchestra 2009

## Stories from Wild Bill

Antigua

Bahamas

Dominican Republic

St. Maarten, Netherlands Antilles

### Carnival Victory 2011

Barbados

St. Kitts and Nevis

St. Lucia

United States (Puerto Rico)

United States (Virgin Islands)

### Havana Marathon Weekend 2011

Cuba

### London (and Paris) 2012

France

United Kingdom (England)

### MSC Poesia 2013

Cayman Islands

Honduras

Jamaica

Mexico

### Norwegian Sky 2014

Bahamas

### Carnival Conquest 2015

Aruba

Curacao

## Stories from Wild Bill

Dominican Republic

Turks and Caicos

Ultimate Africa 2015

Botswana

South Africa

Zambia

Zimbabwe

Europe 2016

Austria

France

Germany

Iceland

Switzerland

Freedom of the Seas 2017

Haiti

St. Kitts and Nevis

St. Maarten, Netherlands Antilles St. Maarten, Netherlands

Antilles

United States (Puerto Rico)

Princess Sapphire 2018

Indonesia

Malaysia

Singapore

Thailand

Vietnam

## Stories from Wild Bill

### Scotland/Ireland 2018

Ireland

United Kingdom (Scotland)

### Symphony of the Seas 2019

Bahamas

Honduras

Mexico

### MSC Poesia 2019

Denmark

Estonia

Germany

Norway

Russia

Sweden

# Travel: What Countries Have You Visited?



I started my travel to foreign lands when I was 10 years old. My parents drove into Mexico with my sibs and I while we were vacationing in Mission Bay, near San Diego. We drove through Tijuana and proceeded south on Baja California to Ensenada. When I was 12, during the family move by car to the Philadelphia Main Line, I entered Canada with the family. I didn't get to a third foreign country, Thailand, until I was 22 and in the Army. The rest of the following alphabetical list were added via trips, which appear in the next chapter. Subsequently, each group of three countries are discussed, including photos.

Antigua and Barbuda

Aruba

Australia

Austria

## Stories from Wild Bill

Bahamas

Barbados

Belize

Botswana

Brazil

Canada

Cayman Islands

Costa Rica

Cuba

Curaçao

Denmark

Dominican Republic

Estonia

France

French Polynesia

Germany

Greece

Haiti

Holy See

Honduras

Iceland

Indonesia

## Stories from Wild Bill

Ireland

Italy

Jamaica

Liechtenstein

Malaysia

Mexico

Monaco

New Zealand

Norway

Panama

Philippines

Portugal

Russia

Saint Kitts and Nevis

Saint Lucia

Senegal

Singapore

South Africa

Spain

Sweden

Switzerland

Thailand

## Stories from Wild Bill

Turkey

United Kingdom

United States

Vietnam

Zambia

Zimbabwe



# Travel: Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Australia



**T**raveling to:

Antigua and Barbuda

MSC Orchestra 2009

Aruba

Birthday in Aruba 2001

Panama Canal 2006

Carnival Conquest 2015

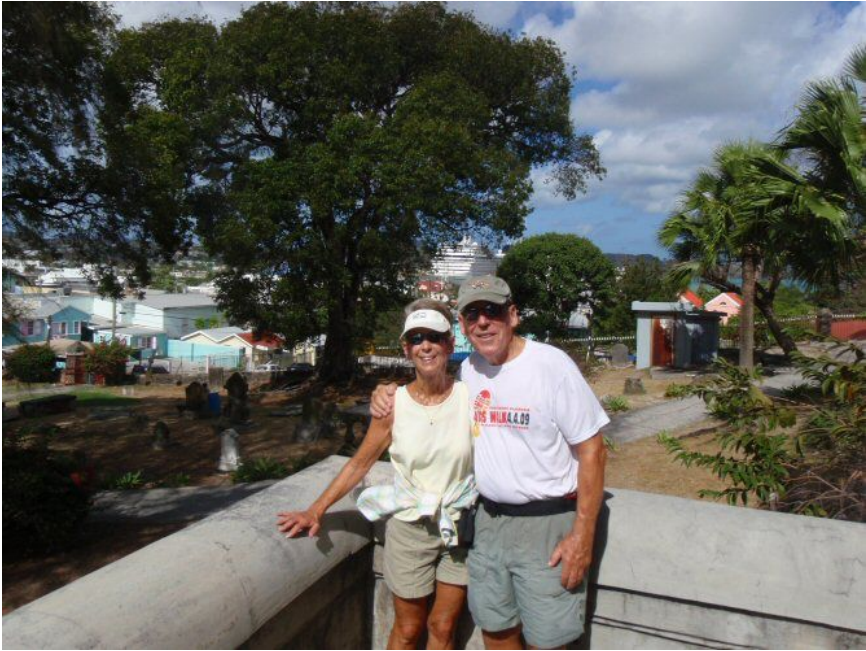
Australia

Down Under 1991

The first photo shows Cathy and I on a walk-around on Antigua. The second photos shows me during a sunset cruise on a “pirate” boat in Aruba after I had swung into the water on a rope swing.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The third photo shows my daughter Katie and I before we both bungee-jumped in Australia.



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Travel: Austria, Bahamas , Barbados



**T**raveling to:

Austria

Europe 2004

Europe 2016

Bahamas

Panama Canal 2006

MSC Orchestra 2009

Norwegian Sky 2014

Symphony of the Seas 2019

Barbados

Carnival Victory 2011

The first photo shows me after a 3.5 mile walk from our Vienna hotel to the Danube River.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The second photo shows Cathy and I kayaking in a lagoon in Half Moon Cay in the Bahamas.

The third photo show a sunken ship when I was snorkeling in Barbados.





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Travel: Belize , Botswana, Brazil



**T**raveling to:

Belize

RV Caravan to Mexico 2004

Botswana

Ultimate Africa 2015

Brazil

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

The first photo shows a pack of painted hunting dogs in Botswana. The next day I had to face down such a pack on a deserted golf course where I was running in 100 degree heat.

The second photo shows us in our formal dinner garb while cruising between ports in Brazil.

The third photo shows the famous beaches of Rio.

## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Travel: Canada , Cayman Islands , Costa Rica



**T**raveling to:

Canada

Panama Canal 2006

Cayman Islands

Carnival Freedom 2008

MSC Poesia 2013

Costa Rica

Panama Canal 2006

The first photo shows me with some other old relics in Vancouver, B.C.

The second photo shows me with granddaughters Bridget and Rachel at a dolphin encounter in the Cayman Islands.

The third photo shows Cathy on a swinging bridge on an excursion in Costa Rica.



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Travel: Cuba , Curaçao , Denmark



**T**raveling to:

Cuba

Havana Marathon Weekend 2011

Curaçao

Carnival Conquest 2015

Denmark

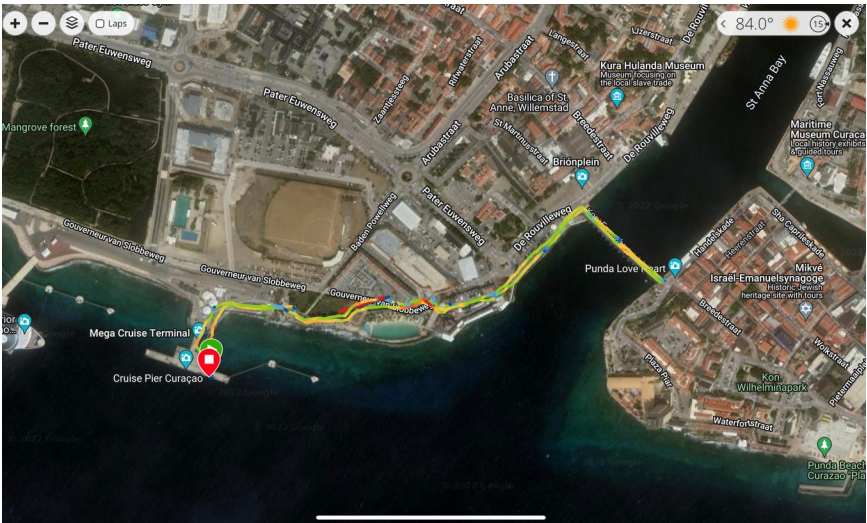
MSC Poesia 2019

The first photo shows Cathy and me after the 5K and Half Marathon runs in Havana.

The second photo shows the course of the walk that Cathy and I took from the ship to the pontoon bridge on Curaçao.

The third photo shows Cathy and grandson Billy near our hotel in Copenhagen.

# Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Travel: Dominican Republic , Estonia, France



**T**raveling to:

Dominican Republic

MSC Orchestra 2009

Carnival Conquest 2015

Estonia

MSC Poesia 2019

France

Europe 1985

London (and Paris) 2012

France 2014

Europe 2016

The first photo shows me snorkeling in the Dominican Republic.

The second photo shows grandson Billy in Tallinn, Estonia.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The third photo shows Cathy and I at our 50th Anniversary party in the Eiffel Tower.





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





# Travel: French Polynesia , Germany , Greece



**T**raveling to:

French Polynesia

25th Anniversary Cruise 1991

Germany

Europe 2004

Europe 2016

MSC Poesia 2019

Greece

Greece 1990

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

The first photo shows Cathy and me enjoying our 25th Anniversary dinner at Bora Bora.

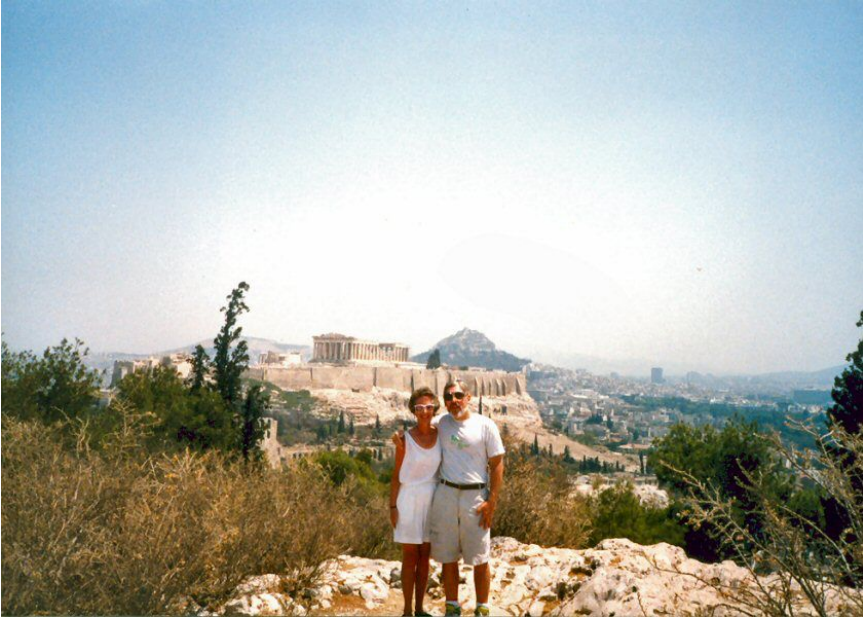
The second photo shows son-in-law Tom, his friend Paul, me, Cathy, and daughter Katie at dinner in a restaurant in Munich.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The third photo shows Cathy and me on a hill overlooking the Acropolis in Athens.



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Travel: Haiti , Holy See, Honduras



**T**raveling to:

Haiti

Freedom of the Seas 2017

Holy See

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

Honduras

MSC Poesia 2013

Symphony of the Seas 2019

The first photo shows Cathy relaxing beachside in Haiti.

The second photo shows the view that Cathy and I got from inside the Dome in the Basilica of St. Peter when we mistakenly climbed the dome instead of entering via the front door.

The third photo shows me crawling through the mud during an adventure race in Roatan, Honduras.



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Travel: Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland



**T**raveling to:

Iceland

Europe 2016

Indonesia

Princess Sapphire 2018

Ireland

British Isles 1989

Scotland/Ireland 2018

The first photo shows Cathy hiking toward a glacier in Iceland.

The second photo shows Cathy and me on the dock in Bali.

The third photo shows Cathy at the Dingle Peninsula in Ireland.

# Stories from Wild Bill



**BALI (BENOA) - INDONESIA**

S A P P H I R E P R I N C E S S

B&G Events



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Travel: Italy, Jamaica, Liechtenstein



**T**raveling to:

Italy

Europe 1985

35th Anniversary in Venice 2001

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

Jamaica

Carnival Freedom 2008

MSC Poesia 2013

Liechtenstein

Europe 2004

The first photo shows Cathy and me at dinner in Venice.

The second photo shows Cathy with granddaughters Bridget and Erin at Dunn's Falls in Jamaica.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The third photo shows me with granddaughters Rachel and Bridget at Dunn's Falls in Jamaica.





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Travel: Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco



**T**raveling to:

Malaysia

Princess Sapphire 2018

Mexico

Transcontinental 1984

RV Caravan to Mexico 2004

RV Caravan to Mexico 2005

MSC Poesia 2013

Symphony of the Seas 2019

Monaco

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

The first photo shows Cathy and our friend Carol Montgomery in a square in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The second photo shows Cathy and me at Agua Azul near Palenque in Mexico.

The third photo shows Cathy halfway up a pyramid in the ruins of Uxmal, Mexico.



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Travel: New Zealand, Norway, Panama



**T**raveling to:

New Zealand

Down Under 1991

Norway

Backpacking in Norway 1990

MSC Poesia 2019

Panama

Panama Canal 2006

The first photo shows me preparing to go blackwater (cave) rafting with daughter Katie in New Zealand.

The second photo shows Cathy, my brother Jack, my sister-in-law JoAnn, and me at a lunch stop on the trail in Norway in July.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The third photo shows Cathy and me on the dock in Flam, Norway, 29 years after we posed for a similar photo on the same dock.





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Travel: Philippines, Portugal, Russia



**T**raveling to:

Philippines

I stopped at Clark Air Base on the way to a year in Thailand in the Army in 1963.

Portugal

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

Russia

MSC Poesia 2019

The first photo shows Cathy enjoying a cafe con leche in Lisbon, Portugal.

The second photo shows me and Cathy in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The third photo shows Cathy, daughter-in-law Stacey, and grandson Billy at the Palace of Peter the Great.

## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Travel: Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Senegal



**T**raveling to:

Saint Kitts and Nevis

Carnival Victory 2011

Freedom of the Seas 2017

Saint Lucia

Carnival Victory 2011

Senegal

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

The first photo shows Cathy on a paddle on St. Kitts.

The second photo shows Cathy on a paddle on St. Lucia.

The third photo shows a desert village in Senegal. We paid the woman with the baby a dollar to take her photo.

## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Travel: Singapore, South Africa, Spain



**T**raveling to:

Singapore

Princess Sapphire 2018

South Africa

Ultimate Africa 2015

Spain

4 Months in Spain 2003

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

The first photo shows Cathy and me at a Buddhist temple in Singapore.

The second photo shows me standing in the Indian Ocean.

The third photo shows me in Mini Hollywood, near Almeria, Spain, where several “spaghetti westerns” were filmed.

Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Travel: Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand



**T**raveling to:

Sweden

MSC Poesia 2019

Switzerland

Europe 1985

Europe 2004

Europe 2016

Thailand

1963 tour of duty in the Army

Princess Sapphire 2018

The first photo shows Cathy and grandson Billy exploring an alley in Stockholm, Sweden.

The second photo shows me and Cathy at a mountain lake on the trail to the summit of the Schilthorn about Murren, Switzerland.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The third photo shows me and Cathy getting off of the ship in Phuket, Thailand.





# Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Travel: Turkey, United Kingdom, United States



**T**raveling to:

Turkey

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

United Kingdom

Europe 1985

British Isles 1989

4 Months in Spain 2003

Transatlantic Cruise 2007

London (and Paris) 2012

Scotland/Ireland 2018

United States

Transcontinental 1984

Hawaii 2005

Panama Canal 2006

California 2007

## Stories from Wild Bill

Carnival Victory 2011

Freedom of the Seas 2017

The first photo shows Cathy at the purported home of Blessed Mother Mary in Ephesus, Turkey.

The second photo shows daughter Katie and me at the London Olympics in 2012, 28 years after the two of us attended the 3 meter diving at the LA Olympics in 1984.

The third photo shows our family at Mount Rushmore in 1984.



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Travel: Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe



**T**raveling to:

Vietnam

Princess Sapphire 2018

Zambia

Ultimate Africa 2015

Zimbabwe

Ultimate Africa 2015

The first photo shows Cathy and me on the dock in Vietnam.

The second photo shows tse tse flies on the back of our guide in Zambia, the only country we visited in Africa that has them. I got a bite on the back of my ear.

The third photo shows me bungee jumping from the Victoria Falls Bridge 420 feet over the Zambezi River in Zimbabwe.



Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# How did you do in school?



I was a tough kid to have around the house, so my parents sent me to two years of nursery school before I went to kindergarten. I don't remember much about nursery school, but I think it was held in my elementary school, Beresford, in San Mateo, CA.

My Kindergarten teacher was Miss Budd. I don't remember any studies, but I do remember that the kid next to me at lunch barfed into his soup bowl.

Miss Gamboni taught me in 1st and 2nd grades. One year, she set up a post office within the classroom. We students published our own stamps and we all had P.O. boxes at one side of the post office. Another year we made marionettes with paper mache based on Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. Later, we built a stage and had a puppet show. My puppet didn't make the cut, but I was the handler and voice for Grumpy in the show. I was in the first reading group and proud of it. Our grading system was U(nsfactory), S(atisfactory)-, S, S+, and X (for excellent). I

## Stories from Wild Bill

remember getting mostly Xs and a few grades of S+.

Miss Weber taught me in 3rd grade. When it came to learning times tables, she put up a big poster that had all of our names vertically and gold stars horizontally for each times table that we mastered. I made sure that I always had the most stars.

Miss Kennedy taught me in 4th grade. I had a crush on a fellow student, Diane Lissauer. One day I walked to her house and put a love note in her mailbox. I never dared to talk with her, but she gave me strange looks subsequently.

Miss Stoll taught me in 5th grade. I got into a fist fight on the playground with the principal, Mr. Copeland's, son and got into my only disciplinary situation in grade school. I also remember calling up a girl from my class and asking if she wanted to go to a movie with me at the Manor Theater and her freaking out on the phone.

Miss Teerink taught me in 6th grade. I played the mellophone, similar to a french horn in the school band. We played "Pomp and Circumstance" at our graduation ceremony. I remember giving a lecture to my class about geo-synchronous satellites in 1951, six years before Sputnik.

I performed in school plays and took part in school-wide competitions because I was recognized as one of the smartest

## Stories from Wild Bill

kids in the school. I played football and basketball interscholastically.

The summer before junior high school, my family moved to Penn Valley, PA on Philadelphia's Main Line. I was enrolled in Bala Cynwyd Junior High.

I didn't feel like the new guy in 7th grade because many grade schools were combined into the student body. Except for the 1st quarter, I got straight A's all through junior high and made the honor roll all of those other quarters. I was most interested in math and science. I played football in 8th grade and tried out for the basketball team in 9th grade. I was slated to be a starter in basketball, but quit before the season because my neighborhood had a football field and a full-court basketball court. During 8th grade I and all of my classmates had to attend an assembly where we were told that we had to map out our educational path through college. I wanted to become a Chemistry Major in college, which meant that I had to take German as my foreign language. I also took typewriting in 8th grade, which turned out to be one of my most useful courses later in life.

My high school was Lower Merion, in Ardmore, PA, one of the most prestigious in the country. Time magazine had us ranked in the top 5 nationally when I was a senior in 1958. I didn't socialize much with my classmates because I hung out with a group of

## Stories from Wild Bill

neighborhood kids who did sports together and I did all of my dating with students of Mater Misericordia and Notre Dame de Nameur private girls' schools.

My parents ruined my academic career by comparing me to my older brother Jack and forcing me to take a fourth major subject in my sophomore year. I intuited that I had to do everything as well as my brother without getting any credit for it. I ended up with a couple of Ds, although I was trying to fail Biology. The problem was that, even though I didn't study, when it came to the tests I couldn't put down wrong answers. Algebra II and Chemistry brought me back to excelling and I was selected for a Special Physics class which held the cream of the crop of the student body. I was also selected as a delegate to the Philadelphia Science Council and also to a panel on a radio show about science. My most worthwhile subjects were my three years of English, where I learned to love to read.

My high school grades ended up a bit spotty, but I had great SAT scores and was an honorable mention Merit Scholar. I've always had a super power for taking standardized tests. Lehigh University reached out to me and asked me to apply. Meanwhile, my father said to me, "You can be any kind of engineer you want to be at Penn State." He was a 1929 graduate of Penn State in Electrical Engineering. My brother Jack was in the class of 1959 at Penn State in Chemical Engineering. I told my father that I

## Stories from Wild Bill

was going to attend Villanova as a Chemistry Major. What I really wanted to do was to enlist in the Marine Corps and go to college later. My parents talked me out of that idea.

I was a real hotshot in my freshman year at Villanova. I won the Freshman Achievement Award in Chemistry at the end of the year. I had a 100% average in my 5 credit Calculus course for both semesters. I applied for and got a summer job in the chemistry lab storeroom which provided for good educational and networking experiences. That summer I also met a girl who sidetracked my life and lessened my interest in academics.

I had an off-year for my sophomore semesters at Villanova. My GPA went from 3.98 down to 3.2. I also changed my major to Mathematics. Looking for more changes in my life, I transferred to Florida State University to commence with the Fall, 1960 semester. Also, I accepted an internship at UCLA as a lab technician on a cancer research project in the Radiology Department.

My junior year at Florida State ended with me being expelled. I had decided that the social aspects of campus life were sufficient and I didn't have to indulge in academics. I had a fun year. Toward the end of the 2nd semester, I went to a Marine Corps recruiter and took the entrance exam. I scored very high, but I didn't want to commit to a 4 year enlistment term.

## Stories from Wild Bill

I entered the Army on September 13, 1961 for a 3 year enlistment term. During my 3rd year in the Army, I applied to Villanova for re-entry as a junior Mathematics major. I was accepted, but the Dean of Admissions, in an interview, warned me that my classmates had learned a different style of mathematics, that I would have forgotten a lot, and that he wasn't sure that I would succeed. I took on the challenge.

My first semester back was a terrific challenge. There were 3 fellow Math majors who had over a 3.5 average compared to my 3.2. I had forgotten a lot of the basics and had to struggle through Advanced Calculus and Linear Algebra. Luckily, my future wife Cathy was my support person who believed in my ability. The low point of the semester came in the first Linear Algebra exam where I scored a class low of 42. I bought a blackboard and installed it in my bedroom for solving problems. I amped up my work ethic, but I was discouraged. I battled through the semester. During the winter break, I received a letter from my Linear Algebra professor, Harold Robbins. He said that he'd never seen anything like it: I was the only one in the class with 100% on the final exam. The second semester was much better. I intended to go to graduate school and took the GRE in the spring. I was disappointed with the 69 percentile that I scored in the Mathematics part. During the summer, I bought a calculus book and worked my way through it to try to recover my

## Stories from Wild Bill

past knowledge.

In my senior year, I was back to my old self. I had emerged as the best of the mathematics majors in my class. A professor, Lucian Roy, met with me weekly and had me work through problems in two graduate school textbooks. I retook the GRE and scored 95 percentile in the Mathematics part. I was accepted at Penn State in the Ph.D. program in Mathematics with a federal fellowship which covered all of my tuition and a (barely) livable stipend. I peaked during the second semester, when I took 4 Mathematics courses and received my first 4.0 average for the semester. I ended up with a 3.49 GPA, the best of the class of my major, but 0.01 short of graduating cum laude.

During the summer of 1966, Cathy and I were married. We both arrived at Penn State for the Fall semester. My first hurdle was the language requirement. I had to pass exams in two languages; I chose German and French. I knew enough from high school and college to pass German. I took a French short course and was able to pass the French exam. Since I had a fellowship, I could devote all of my time to studying. I was given a desk in an office in the Mathematics building. I treated my student life like a job: at the desk at 7am, work until 5pm. Meanwhile, some of my classmates were hitting the bars in the evening and then studying late at night. I was considered the best of the class and I earned it. I really enjoyed graduate school, but Cathy wanted to

## Stories from Wild Bill

get on to real life and start a family. She pushed me to finish my Ph.D. program in March, 1969, record time. I ended up with a 4.0 GPA in graduate school.

I enrolled in Penn State again during the summer of 1975. I was able to use 3 months of my 36 available months of the G.I. Bill for Vietnam Era veterans to pay for classes and our apartment sublet in State College. I took some computer courses to bolster my background for teaching computer courses at Shippensburg University, my place of employment. I kept my 4.0 GPA, in spite of a deja vu experience in a Data Structures course. I took my first exam in the course and got a horribly low score, the worst in the class. I wasn't super prepared for the exam and Cathy and our 3 kids were waiting for me outside while I was taking the exam and the pressure made me panic. I talked with the professor when I received my score and explained the situation. He said, "In the real world, people have to work under pressure." I always remembered that BS while I was teaching. I had never told my professors that summer that I was also a professor. They all assumed I was just a regular student. When I took the final exam for the Data Structures course, I turned in my paper after about 20 minutes. The professor said, "You had to give up, huh?" I retorted, "That is a 100% paper." And it was.

For the spring semester 1977, I took a sabbatical leave in the Computer Science Department at Duke University. I was allowed



## Stories from Wild Bill

to sit-in on two courses. I had great fun interacting with some brilliant graduate students.

The first photo shows Beresford Elementary School in San Mateo, CA.

The second photo shows Cathy and me at my Ph.D. hooding at Penn State in 1969.



## Stories from Wild Bill



# “Anaerobic”



“Anaerobic” was the name we called our 24 foot runabout power boat that we owned from 1996 to 2000. My wife Cathy had been bugging me for years to buy a powerboat, and I had demurred, citing that I was an avid kayaker and would rather travel on water that way. “You could fish from the boat,” she said. “I haven’t fished since I was a kid,” I said. After we bought the boat on Labor Day weekend, 1996, it turned out that she liked the idea of a boat better than a boat, and I loved fishing from the boat. The boat had a cuddy cabin up forward which contained a porta potty, a sink, and seats that could be made up into a bunk. We used it as a second bedroom a couple of times when company was overflowing our house.

We bought the boat in Wildwood, NJ, but kept it at Cape May Marine either in the water or shrink-wrapped during the winter. I kept a log which showed that we used the boat 50 times a year on average. We sometimes used the boat for floating cocktail parties, but mostly we fished, we meaning mostly me. The most

## Stories from Wild Bill

fun part of the year was striper season in the fall. My fishing buddies, Jimmy and Paula, and I caught a lot of striped bass on the boat. The boat accompanied me on my first two kayak crossings of the Delaware Bay.

As soon as we purchased the boat, Cathy and I both took a Coast Guard Boating Safety course which provided us with valuable information for boating and for my kayaking ventures in saltwater. Cathy outscored me on the final examination for our certificate, but I learned what I needed to know to skipper a boat.

Cathy and I discovered that we are both immune from seasickness. Unfortunately, our children all suffered from seasickness and couldn't enjoy the boat the way we did. We did have some fun tubing from behind the boat, but it was hard to get the kids to join us on the boat.

We could afford the boat and associated expenses since I secured a teaching job at Stockton College outside of Atlantic City to augment my retirement pension. When I decided to resign from Stockton in 1999, the lack of affordability and our kids' seasickness caused us to sell the boat. Someone had told us that the two best days of owning a boat are the day you buy it and the day you sell it.

The first photo shows Anerobic in its berth at Cape May Marine early in the season.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The second photo shows a cocktail cruise on the Anaerobic.

The third photo shows me and a striper I caught.

The fourth photo shows a tubing session in the Delaware Bay.

The fifth photo shows me with fishing buddies Paula and Jamie after a good day of striper fishing.



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Floor Work: Weights and Abs



**T**hrough the years I've developed a routine that I try to do each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning. All that is needed is a pair of hand weights and a roller stick, which can easily be transported on trips. A yoga mat is nice to have, but unnecessary, since a major part of the workout can be done on a rug floor or even on a bed. When we have cruised, I have done the workout in the ship's gym. I use 10 pound hand weights.

Set 1 (weights):

40 reps of standing alternating bicep curls

40 reps of kneeling tricep kick-backs, left arm, left knee down

40 reps of kneeling tricep kick-backs, right arm, right knee down

10 reps of standing alternating arm presses

## Stories from Wild Bill

### Set 2 (floor on back):

100 reps of crunches

50 reps of left side obliques

50 reps of right side obliques

50 reps of alternating obliques

knees-in stretch

full body stretch toes pointed, hands over head

full body stretch toes flexed, hands at sides

20 reps of roller stick on calves, quads, back of thighs, and sides of thighs

20 reps of hip thrusters

### Set 3 (floor on hands and knees):

10 reps cat stretch

1 rep shoulder stretch on both sides

yoga child's pose with toes in, knees out

yoga child's pose with toes in, knees in

plank

### Set 4 (weights on back):

30 reps chest press, hands aligned with legs

30 reps chest press, hands aligned perpendicular to legs

40 reps pec flys

30 reps triceps over head

The workout:

## Stories from Wild Bill

Set 1

Set 2

Set 1

Set 3

Set 4

Set 1

## Stories from Wild Bill

# Heroics



**A** couple of times in my life, I've been in situations where I was a hero. The best definition of the word "hero" that I've seen is, "One who runs toward dangerous situations."

The first time came when I was a senior in high school, around 1958. I was in my room studying, when I heard some screaming out on our front lawn. I looked out the window and I saw Lynn Grauch, our neighbor from across the street, running frantically away from her house and yelling for help. I dashed out of the house and ran across the street, jumping over a bush on the way and headed for the side kitchen door where smoke was billowing out. I rushed into the kitchen and saw Mrs. Grauch trying to pour salt on a grease fire in the stove, while the window curtains were ablaze. I grabbed her and pushed her out into her driveway and ran back into the house. I pulled down the burning curtains and stamped them out. Then, I located a pot and repeatedly filled it with water and drenched the fire. When the fire was out, I went

## Stories from Wild Bill

out to comfort Mrs. Grauch, while a neighbor called the fire department. The house endured some smoke damage, but I saved Mrs. Grauch and prevented a much worse fire. I did all of this by instinct.

The second time came in Key West on New Year's Eve, 2003. My wife Cathy and I were camping for the first time in our pop-up camper and had arrived at the Sugarloaf Key KOA campground a bit before noon. We immediately saw how crowded it was due to the holiday. A customer service guy on a golf cart led us to our site and helped me back in. Our first time setting up camp was an exercise in ineptitude, but we kept a sense of humor about it. I decided to fill our propane tanks first. When I removed one of the tanks, I noticed that it was heavy as if it was full of propane. Our dealer never told us that there was gas in the tanks, so we assumed that they were empty. We also found that we did not have a sewer hookup as I had expected. I asked one of the customer service guys and he told me that we could borrow a tote, which we did. We had a lot of problems getting our two "gray water" drains to work until we cut a couple of hoses to make very short ones. We popped the camper without too much difficulty since we had practiced that part. I hooked up to the water supply using our new water pressure regulator, but the connection leaked and we had almost no pressure. Luckily the guy in the huge RV next to us was a plumber and turned the

## Stories from Wild Bill

regulator's screen around. It seems that the water faucet has a plastic tip in it that was pushing against the screen. We ate lunch in the campground snack bar. After lunch, we got our electricity working and, after some difficulty, got our stove working. By this time, our daughter Katie and husband Tom had arrived at their suite in the Quality Inn in Key West, so we drove over to join them for the evening's festivities. We decided to walk to the old seaport, about 3 miles away. We ate a wonderful dinner at Turtle Kraals with only a five minute wait to be seated. Then we headed over to Duval Street to immerse ourselves in the action. We walked around for a while and then went to a bar to sit and drink for a while. Cathy and I decided to call it quits around 10:30 PM and leave the night to the young. As we were walking down Duval Street, we noticed the couple ahead of us: a very drunk man, a moderately drunk woman, and a small baby in a soft backpack on the man's back. As we watched, we saw that the baby was starting to fall out of the backpack sideways. I ran up and caught the baby and told the mother what had happened. The guy was oblivious, but she cared enough to walk behind the guy to keep a bloodshot eye on the baby. The adventures continued.

The first photo shows our pop-up camper.

The second photo shows Katie and Tom with Cathy in the street in front of Sloppy Joes's.

## Stories from Wild Bill





# Camping



**M**y father took Army ROTC at Penn State and graduated in 1929, commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant. He ran a CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) camp in Pennsylvania and perhaps learned to love camping from that experience.

At some point in my early childhood in the San Francisco Bay Area, my father bought a pair of large, heavy umbrella tents to be used in family weekend and summer vacation camping trips to the state and national parks in California. I suspect that my mother never liked camping, but she did it with the family.

We didn't really rough it when we were camping as a family. The kids each had a cot and a sleeping bag. My parents brought a full-sized mattress and a double sleeping bag. My mother cooked using a propane stove with a couple of burners. We had a white gas lantern to light up the campsite. I remember camping at Yosemite, Lassen, and Sequoia National Parks, always on a lake, and sometimes the only campsite at that location.

## Stories from Wild Bill

After we moved to the East Coast in 1952, I only remember one camping trip at Parvin State Park in New Jersey. I spent some years in the Boy Scouts and Explorers and did several camping trips in Pennsylvania, notably at Delmont Boy Scout Camp, at Hickory Run State Park, and on the beach at Cape May Point, New Jersey.

During summers between ages 12 and 16, I often pitched a tent in our backyard and spent many nights sleeping outside. I remember wandering around with friends at wee hours of the morning.

I enlisted in the Army in September, 1961 and did a lot of tent camping in the desert outside of Fort Bliss, Texas. During the entire year of 1963, I lived in a hootch outside of Korat, Thailand, which was kinda like camping.

I didn't camp again until the 1980s, when my wife and I bought mountain bikes. At that time we lived in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania. We lived about 40 miles from Hagerstown, Maryland and the C&O Canal along the Potomac River. We enjoyed driving down and riding on the tow path. I noticed that there were small primitive camp sites along the path and asked my wife if she'd like to camp there. She demurred, so I bought some backpacking camping gear and panniers for my bike to carry it. One Saturday I rode the 40 miles down to the tow path

## Stories from Wild Bill

and setup camp. I had a little stove to cook with and managed to cook dinner. It rained all night. When I awoke in the morning, I had to cook my coffee and oatmeal in the vestibule of my small tent. As I packed up in the rain for the trip back home, I discovered a flat tire, which I patched. I rode home in the rain.

During a 6 week total immersion French experience at Laval University in Quebec City in 1993, we camped twice. It was a bit awkward for me, since I had fractured my collarbone in a bike accident just days before leaving for the trip. We had borrowed a tent and a leaky air mattress from my brother Jack. Our first outing was at a National Park in Quebec. We were alone at a remote campground. We had a campfire since it was a bit chilly at night. I dreamt of bears and woke up in the middle of the night as the air mattress lost air. I wasn't allowed to flex my shoulders because of my healing collarbone, so I sat by the fire until 6am when I felt I could wake Cathy. Unfortunately, I ran out of firewood at 5am, so I shivered for an hour. We stopped on way home for pancakes, which made me feel better. We used a better camping mattress for our second campsite on a bluff overlooking a river at La Malbaie. It was later in the summer and farther south, so the night was warmer.

In 1994, when Cathy and I hiked a Rim-to-Rim in the Grand Canyon, we also camped twice in my 1.5 person backpacking tent, once at Moab, Utah where we were visiting Arches National

## Stories from Wild Bill

Park, and once again outside of Mesa Verde National Park.

In 2001, I went for a few nights of kayak/camping on Assateague Island, MD. The island is notorious for its insects, so our group started the trip on April 2nd, after the hard freeze and before the insects. The nights were cold in our tents. We had to carry all of our supplies, including water. The evening campfires were very special.

During the summer of 2004, we bought a pop-up camper and joined an RV caravan for a 44 day tour of Mexico. We were the only ones with a pop-up on the trip, or any other trip organized by the tour company. It was quite an adventure, but afterward we only camped on the way home and traded the pop-up for a motorhome.

In 2005 we decided to go with a smaller group of RVs on a tour of the western coast of Mexico. It wasn't roughing it in a small motorhome, but still closer to nature than in a hotel. We were in Puerta Vallarta when we heard that our granddaughter Rachel had been born early, so we rushed back to Tucson, where Cathy flew to the new baby. I meandered around Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas before driving north.

In 2007 we were heading to Mazatlan, Mexico for 4 months at a seaside campground that we were interested in investing in. We got as far as Shreveport, Louisiana, where Cathy stayed for 3

## Stories from Wild Bill

nights in the hospital due to food poisoning obtained from a Chinese food kiosk in a mall in Monroe, Louisiana. This terminated our Mexican camping. We knocked around Texas for a while, dodging ice storms, trying to find some warm weather. Finally, in a chilly South Padre Island, we decided that to stay in the country, we would have to go to South Florida. We reserved a campsite in Rock Creek RV Park in Naples, where we became winter denizens.

In 2009, I rediscovered kayak/camping when I joined a group to do some winter camping in the 10,000 Islands of South Florida. We had to carry all of our own supplies, including water. I repeated the adventure for the next three years.

In 2010, we got rid of our RV and settled into a Park Model trailer for half of the year at Rock Creek RV resort in Naples.

In 2015, we did some camping during our Safari in South Africa.

In 2020, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we bought a Nissan cargo van and turned it into a hotel room on wheels by added a double bunk and a toilet in the back area. We used the van as a safe refuge and also camped for two nights on our way south to Naples. It was a little cramped, but served the pupose.

In 2021, we traded our cargo van for a Toyota Rav4 and haven't camped since then.

## Stories from Wild Bill

I also did some car camping for events such as the Paddle for a Cause in Atlantic City, the Seven Mile Bridge run in Marathon, FL, and the Key West Half Marathon.

The first photo shows my father amid tents at his CCC camp.

The second photo shows our campsite in Moab, Utah.

The third photo shows our campsite near Mesa Verde.

The fourth photo shows my kayak and tent on Assateague Island.

The fifth photo shows our pop-up camper in Mexico.

The sixth photo shows our BT Cruiser motorhome in a campground at San Carlos, Mexico.

The seventh photo shows a scary sky before a storm at Rock Hound State Park in New Mexico.

The eighth photo shows our campsite in Shreveport, Louisiana, where we stayed much longer than we wanted.

The ninth photo shows a typical camp on one of the white sand beaches of the outer keys in the 10,000 Islands.

The tenth photo was a classic from Round Key taken on a day paddle from our campsite in the 10,000 Islands.

The eleventh photo shows that I finally got a new, slightly bigger tent for kayak/camping.

The twelfth photo shows Cathy entering a mess tent on Safari.

The thirteenth photo shows how we tricked out our cargo van.

The fourteenth photo shows our campsite in North Carolina.

## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



**Our campsite in Paamul. There were a lot of permanent residents in the park with palapas (grass huts) built around their rigs. It is a nice park with a great beach, but even paradise can get boring.**

## Stories from Wild Bill



At El Mirador, we had water views...

## Stories from Wild Bill



**Bill was doing some rockhounding up on the mountainside when he heard thunder. He hustled down and just missed being caught by the approaching storm.**

## Stories from Wild Bill



Our campsite at the Shreveport KOA.





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Hiking



I started hiking at an early age with my family while camping in various national parks in California. It seemed to me, as a young boy, that we hiked every day, but I'm sure it wasn't that often. One of my favorite spots was "Bumpas Hell" in Lassen National Park, on a 3 mile loop hike from a parking lot. When in Yosemite, we mainly hiked along various waterfalls, but I always wanted to hike to the top of Half Dome, which my parents fortunately disallowed when I was under 12 years old.

I didn't do much hiking after moving Back East until I joined the Army in 1961. Our longest hike in Basic Training was 13 miles and wasn't a challenge. When I was stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas, near El Paso, I enjoyed weekend hiking in the nearby mountains.

My wife and I discovered Acadia National Park in Maine in the late 70s. We were already exercise buffs and hiked as many trails as we could on each of numerous visits from then to the present

## Stories from Wild Bill

day. My favorite hike is the Precipice Trail, which I've hiked with my wife and our three children several times.

In 1990, my brothers Jack and Bob, their wives, and my wife and I backpacked from hut to hut for a week in the mountains of Norway. We were shocked at the amount of snow that we had to hike through in mid-July. We concluded our hike in Flam, which we revisited on a cruise in 2019.

Circa 1992, my brothers and I planned to hike with our wives from the north rim of the Grand Canyon down to Phantom Ranch, stay overnight, and then hike up to the south rim. We discovered a few weeks before the trip that the trail from the north rim was washed out and closed for repairs, so we decided to hike down the South Kaibab Trail from the south rim to Phantom Ranch and hike up the Bright Angel Trail back to the south rim the next day. After this hike, Cathy and I drove over to Kayenta, Arizona to stay at a motel. The next day we went to the Keet Seel Trailhead and hiked the 17 mile out and back trip to the Keet Seel ruins. Only 20 people a day are allowed on the trail, so the hike must be reserved. Once out at the ruins, a National Park Ranger took another hiker, Cathy, and I on a private tour of the ruins. Quite an awesome adventure. The hike crosses a shallow stream about 6 times on the way out. For this trip we flew to Phoenix, visited Sedona, where we hiked to the summit of Mt. Wilson and ate lunch overlooking the airport mesa.

## Stories from Wild Bill

In 1994, my wife and I hiked from the north rim to the south rim of the Grand Canyon in one day (R2R). The 23 mile hike through heat that reached 111 degrees at the bottom took us from just before dawn to just before dusk. I continue to be amazed by the toughness of my wife. We hiked on segments of the Appalachian Trail from Harper's Ferry to the Juniata River while training during the summer leading up to the R2R, which occurred in Early August. On one memorable hike we were caught in a nasty T-storm which caused us to go down from the rim and hide under a bush.

While we were en route to the R2R, we did a classic rock scramble up to the summit of Mt. Evans, one of Colorado's fourteeners, with my brother Jack. This is the only fourteener that my wife and I have climbed, but my brother Jack bagged a few more of those peaks.

Cathy and I made our first of many trips to Key West during the holidays of 1996, when we traveled with our children following Christmas with Cathy's sister in the Clearwater, FL area. In subsequent trips, we developed a habit of attempting to hike the whole circumference of the island. We usually stuck to the roads, but one trip we trespassed on government property in a number of spots in order to get a true circumambulation. We often had lunch at the Schooner Wharf bar as part of the hike. We

## Stories from Wild Bill

estimated the hikes as at least 10 miles. EMBED PHOTO!

Just after our August 6, 1998 32nd Anniversary, Cathy and I embarked on a trip on a high-speed ferry from Bar Harbor to Falmouth, Nova Scotia. Our mission was to experience the extremes of high and low tide, and in particular to hike 10 miles out and back on Cape Split, traveling halfway out on the Bay of Fundy. Awesome open views of mighty tidal rips with loud standing waves awaited us at the end. We found ourselves high up above the water on a cliff with a meadow on top.

When we were in Spain for four months in 2003, we traveled every weekend and did a lot of urban and countryside hiking. We didn't have a car for most of the trip, so our feet and buses were our forms of transport.

Katie and Tom visited us in Spain for a week of touring in a rental car. When we got to Gibraltar, we did a classic hike, best described in our "Emails from Spain:" We followed Rick Steve's advice on parking outside of Gibraltar and walking in. Katie and Tom had a strong desire to tour Gibraltar totally on foot. An aggressive cab driver told us we'd never be able to walk to the top. We walked up to St. Michael's caves and ate a reasonable good lunch with a good view at the associated restaurant. Then we walked up to the summit: O'Hara's Battery. A couple of the old nine inch guns are still up there. My wife was suffering from

## Stories from Wild Bill

frozen shoulders and had to keep her arms to her sides. We left her behind as we scrambled over a rocky trail and squeezed through some gates. When we arrived at the summit, we looked around and saw Cathy right behind us. From the summit, we found another trail along a ridge. Katie was acting as a scout for us and checking out the trail up ahead. She was carrying a plastic bag with some water and granola bars. An ape sneaked up behind her and snatched the bag away. The ape and his group tore into the contents immediately. That encounter made us decide to descend from the rock. We walked back down and though the shopping area where we stopped for a snack. We got back to the car at about 5:30 PM. Our foot tour of Gibraltar took about 6.5 hours. We walked about 8 miles, some of it uphill.

During the summer of 2004, we took our new BT Cruiser motorhome for its first camping outing by visiting a campground in the Delaware Water Gap, NJ. Katie and Tom joined us late on Friday night and got to enjoy some tent camping alongside our RV. Bill and Tom hiked up Mt. Tammany while Cathy and Katie napped. Bill and Tom saw a large Black Bear lumbering the opposite way at about 50 yards distance. They stared at the bear and the bear stared at them. The bear wasn't afraid and also wasn't interested in the two hikers. The encounter came as Bill and Tom descended from the summit on a less popular path.

## Stories from Wild Bill

During the early fall of 2004, my wife and I joined with daughter Katie, son-in-law Tom and two friends on a trip to Europe. While staying in Murren, Switzerland, we climbed the Shilthorn, an 8 hour 5 hour journey in the alps. The next day, Tom, his friend Paul, and I took a very long, grueling hike up to the end of the valley under Murren, and back up to Murren from the valley below. This hike was the hardest I've ever done.

During the Christmas holidays of 2004, Cathy and I were in son Bill and Stacey's home in Georgia. Our daughter Katie, and son-in-law Tom were also there. One morning, Tom and I got up at 6:30 AM and were in our RV and on the road to Amicalola State Park by 7:00 AM. We were quickly into the very rural North Georgia countryside which was both beautiful and bereft of places to eat breakfast. Finally we found a little, rundown gas station and store and went in. In our minds, banjo music was lightly playing as we surveyed the scene. There was a guy sitting at a table with a look on his face that said, "If I wasn't so lazy, I'd gut you carpetbaggers with my survival knife." Tom bought a chocolate milk and I got a biscuit with jelly and butter and a cup of coffee. We ate out in the RV so as not to anger the hillbilly inside and then drove to the Appalachian Trail office in the state park. We registered for a hike to Springer Mountain and then drove up to the trailhead near the top of the falls. It was a beautiful, crisp day in the mountains. Our route which included

## Stories from Wild Bill

3.4 miles on the Appalachian approach trail to the junction with the Len Foote trail, 4.3 miles to the summit of Springer Mountain, 4.3 miles back to the junction with the Len Foote trail, and a 6 mile longcut down the Len Foote trail back to the RV, was a total of 18 miles of up and down terrain. The summit of Springer Mountain contained the Southern Terminus of the Appalachian Trail and an awesome view of mountains and valleys to accompany our lunch. We saw several friendly people, two hunters carrying guns, and a surprisingly exposed wild turkey as we hiked. We also saw a couple coupling on a bench right on the trail as we neared a bridge over a creek. None of us was embarrassed, but Tom and I were sort of surprised by the display and didn't get any photos. We completed our circuit in 7.5 hours. The average time is 12 hours.

In 2005, after we had exited a Mexican trip due to the birth of our granddaughter Rachel and Cathy had flown from Tucson to help, I found myself in the Southwest in our RV killing time until it had thawed in the north enough for me to safely motor back. Coming down the Interstate, I had noticed that Saquaro National Park was nearby, so I drove there after lunch. At the visitors center, I found the description of a trail which went for 3.5 miles to the summit of Wasson Peak, at 4800 feet the highest in the Tucson Mountains. This sounded like a perfect hike, so I packed GPS, knife, flashlight, camera, cell phone, raincoat, and two

## Stories from Wild Bill

bottles of water into my day pack. I drove to a parking pulloff a bit of a walk from the trailhead and started hiking. When I was getting close to the summit, Cathy called on the cell phone, so I stopped for my first break on the trail and had a chat before continuing to the top. The entire hike took around 3 hours.

On a day in Oahu in 2005: we started the day around 6:00 AM, a time which would become usual for the whole trip. Bill had obtained a special Internet deal for the hotel which included a daily breakfast buffet. Although the buffet was extensive, we settled for fruit and oatmeal to begin most days. The Hawaiian fruit was wonderfully tasty, especially the pineapple. We planned to simply stroll along Waikiki Beach for our first morning, so Bill wore sandals. He had recently bought a pair of North Face Gor-Tex Trail Runners to match those that Cathy already had been using for hikes, but only Cathy wore them. We began to walk to the east, toward Diamond Head, the landmark mountain at the end of the beach. Bill had spent 24 hours on the island back in 1963 on his way to Thailand in the army and had, with some buddies, driven around the island in a rental car. Diamond Head was one of the highlights that he remembered. It was a lovely morning with sunny sky and 85 degree temperature, so it was quite a pleasure to walk. We kept walking past the beach and the road began to climb along the base of the mountain. Soon we needed water and a bathroom, but there weren't any



## Stories from Wild Bill

opportunities for either, so we continued to walk past the lighthouse and a popular local surfing spot. We continued up the mountain to the Diamond Head Crater State Monument where we found water, a bathroom, and a gaggle of tourists from buses and vans. Bill didn't feel so bad about his footwear when he saw flip-flops and water shoes on the feet of some of the others. We joined an "ant trail" of tourists and ascended to the summit, where we were rewarded with a great view. We bought some more water and visited the bathroom again after descending from the summit and walked back toward our hotel. The round trip was 15 miles

2007 Half Dome - Bill got up at 4:00 AM to make final preparations. He ate a breakfast consisting of a banana, a power bar, and a packet of chocolate goo, washed down with a Red Bull. He and Katie and Tom left the lodge just past 5:00 AM. Cathy joined Rachel in her room for a few hours more rest before spending a long day of activities together. The three hikers parked at the Trailhead Parking lot and were off toward the Happy Isles trailhead at 6:02 AM wearing headlights. The Half Dome hike is a classic day hike that is very well described in books and on various websites. The first part consists of the Mist Trail to Vernal and Nevada falls. We hikers were carrying 2 gallons each of water, Gatorade, and Cytomax. As the sun rose, the most beautiful blue sky emerged, framing every view. We

## Stories from Wild Bill

gained a lot of altitude quickly on the Mist Trail which consists largely of stone steps. Throughout the day we encountered many other hikers on the same mission. We traversed Little Yosemite Valley on a trail of sand which made for difficult hiking. The flatness of that section was welcomed, however. Then we started ascending the Subdome where the trail became steeper and steeper. The penultimate section of trail consisted of the very steep switchbacks of steps of the Subdome. By this time the altitude was getting to Bill making him huff and puff. He was reminded of his out-of-breath hiking on Loveland Pass in Colorado the summer before. Finally there were the cables. We did powerbars and goo to fortify ourselves. We packed up our hiking poles and donned our gloves. The cable section was incredibly steep and very hard work on both arms and legs, but at the same time it was uniquely exhilarating. We reached the top and congratulated each other. We sat and enjoyed a trail lunch and posed for pictures before starting back down. The steep cables going down with us facing outward should have been very scary, but the view was so spectacular and we were so grateful for our being there, it was more fun than frightful. Now we began to hike the long way back. We had a great time finishing the 16 mile hike. We got back to our parking lot at 6:02 PM. We were happy but filthy. On the drive back to the lodge, we saw our only bear of the day running along the side of the road and then climbing a tree. Tom took a last photo of Half Dome for

## Stories from Wild Bill

the day. We found Cathy and Rachel eating pizza out on the patio. After showers, the rest of us also enjoyed a pizza dinner.

In preparation for the Half Dome hike in 2007, on Thursday, August 9, Bill left Cape May on an express bus to Philadelphia for a mini-adventure with Katie, Tom, and Rachel. The bus departed at 7:55 AM from the Cape May Transportation Center and acted as a local bus until it had left North Wildwood via the bridge. To pass the time, Bill worked on a couple of NY Times crossword puzzles from the book that Son Bill and Stacey had presented the past Christmas. The bus arrived at the Greyhound Bus Station at 11th and Filbert at around 10:30 AM. The next step was to take an R5 Regional Septa Train from Market Street East, across the street from the Bus Terminal. Bill had to wait around 40 minutes for the train. It was interesting to observe the Philadelphia neighborhoods and suburbs as the train headed north. After almost an hour and a half, the train arrived at the New Britain station. Bill put his heavy backpack on and walked around a half mile to Kate and Tom's house. Bill arrived around 1:00 PM for a total of about 5 hours and a total fare of \$9.25 due to generous senior discounts. Bill did a bit of shopping and watched a movie on TV to fill-in the time until leaving to pick up Rachel at daycare. Rachel was happy to see Bill, but not so happy about leaving daycare with him. Luckily, when they got into the car, Bill was able to interest Rachel in one of the pop-up books that

## Stories from Wild Bill

Cathy had purchased for her. Bill and Rachel drove to Merck in Landsdale to meet Katie and Tom. All four headed west on the turnpike and then south on I81 with a destination of Roanoke, VA. Unfortunately, Tom had to drive through hours of heavy thunderstorms. They stopped for dinner at the Subway in Chambersburg, PA. Katie took over the wheel after the rain had stopped and guided us to Tom's sister Jenn's house in Roanoke, where they arrived around 1:00 AM. It took a short time to settle in and soon they were resting for the night. They got a bit of a late start on Friday morning, but the four travelers managed to reach the trailhead for McAfee's Knob around 10:20 AM, after shopping at Krogers and breakfast from Starbucks. Katie and Tom shared the 30 something pound load of Rachel on their backs for the 7 mile round trip. The temperature reached 100 degrees and it felt like it. Rachel enjoyed her ride in the backpack and helped find the white blazes on trees that mark the trail. The hikers were carrying lots of water, but still got pretty dehydrated during the hike. It took them the rest of the day and evening to re-hydrate. After showers, the hikers and Jenn ate good italian food at Frank's in Roanoke. After dinner, the five of them drove to Covington to visit the recuperating grandfather of Tom and Jenn and Tom's parents and grandmother. Bedtime back at Jenn's house was around 11:00 PM. On Saturday morning, Bill, Katie, and Tom awoke at 6:00 AM and got their gear together for another day of hiking. They ate breakfast at the Daily Grind

## Stories from Wild Bill

coffee shop and were at the Dragon's Tooth trailhead at 8:20 AM. The hikers did a better job of hydrating before the hike and were carrying more water this day. Bill was carrying 1.5 gallons of water and a quart of electrolyte (similar to Gatorade). Tom and Katie carried nearly 3 gallons of water and electrolyte between them. They tailgated for lunch after the first hike and then moved on to repeat the McAfee's Knob hike again. When the day's activities were complete, they had hiked for 12 miles and 8 hours. Although the fluid situation was better, they all enjoyed a stop at a convenience store for more to drink. Jenn and Tom's parents spent the day with Rachel. Later on, Tom's parents headed home and the rest of them ate Thai take-out. Bedtime was somewhat earlier on Saturday night. Sunday was another early morning and the travelers were on the road at 9:08 AM after breakfast at Panera Bread. The day was beautiful for a long drive. Rachel and Bill sat in the back seat and enjoyed talking and playing with Rachel's shoes. They stopped for lunch at Subway in Chambersburg. Rachel and the rest were all well-behaved for the whole trip back to Merck in Lansdale, PA. Bill moved his gear to Katie's Grand Am around 4:30 PM. Bill stopped at a nearby Weiss market for some Gatorade and then drove to Cape May Beach, arriving around 7:00 PM. Katie and Tom really know how to use their time efficiently.

## Stories from Wild Bill

My son-in-law Tom prides himself on pushing me to my limits whenever he gets the opportunity to do an outing involving just the two of us. On his wedding day, with my daughter, Tom introduced me to bike riding in Blacksburg, Virginia, where you start at your high point, descend into the valley and then bust butt to get back. Another time, in Georgia, he had me hiking up Springer Mountain from Amicalola Falls, a 17 mile round trip with lots of climbing. We had a third guy with us the day in Switzerland that we took a much, much longer hike than we needed or wanted. At dinner that night, we consumed \$24 worth of mineral water (back when the exchange rate was good). In 2008, on a trip to Colorado, when Tom suggested that the two of us hike up to Estes Cone on a cold and breezy day when the women didn't want to venture out, I should have been more wary. A couple of hours later, I was huffing and puffing as we ascended a very steep trail to the 11,000 foot summit. I made it to the top and was rewarded with views as breathtaking as the hike. It was so windy and cold at the top that Tom and I ate our peanut butter sandwiches wearing gloves.

During the holidays of 2014, we were in Las Vegas visiting son Bill and Stacey with daughter Katie and son-in-law Tom. After breakfast, a three generation hiking party consisting of me, son Bill, Katie, Tom, and granddaughters Rachel and Sarah got all of our hiking gear together and headed out to Red Rock Canyon for

## Stories from Wild Bill

a hike up Turtlehead Peak. This was a tough hike with a lot of steep areas of loose rocks and some very strong cold winds. We were already 4300 feet high and gained 2500 feet of elevation. I was very proud of Rachel and Sarah for their show of mettle on the trek.

I enjoyed an active day in 2018 in Scotland, from my 3 mile walk before breakfast in Oban, a family walk after breakfast in Oban, to an amazing hotel in the far north of Isle of Skye, with a nice hike at Glencoe, wearing my kilt, with daughter Katie, son-in-law Tom, grandson Eric, and friend Matt, great driving past spectacular scenery.

On a day of a Baltic cruise in 2019: I had my only stationary deck run, 3.1 miles, while the boat was at dock in Warnemünde, Germany, starting at 5:27am. The first time we were here, we headed to Berlin and ignored this little seaside resort town. It was a bit of a cool day, so speedos and thongs seemed inappropriate. We settled for long pants and long sleeves. Both times that we came into the inlet, we had spotted the red and green lighthouse markers at the ends of the inlet jetties. We were surprised to find that “red on right returning” is not an international navigation standard. Subsequent research informed me that there are two sets of navigation rules for two zones of the earth. That seems as stupid and dangerous as royalty, but probably also is divinely ordained. Regardless, I got

## Stories from Wild Bill

it into my mind that I would walk the jetties on both sides of the inlet to get to the lighthouses. The night before our second visit, I read Rick Steve's description of Warnemünde and discovered that there is also a 105' high lighthouse in town. Billy and Stacey wanted a rest day, so Cathy was left with me as her traveling companion ashore. We left the ship and went into a nearby information center to figure out how to get to the jetties. I'm glad we stopped, because I'm not sure I would have figured the way was to "go up the road, turn left and go under the train station in a tunnel, then go straight over the bridge and turn right." Anyway, we followed the directions and found a very cute walkway/boardwalk with various fishing boats and shops along the way. We saw the tall lighthouse as we walked, but were determined to get to the green lighthouse at the end of the jetty. We passed by the beach where everyone was fully clothed due to the temperature and wind. Having attained our first objective, we headed back to the tall lighthouse. Rick Steves had informed me that I could climb it for a fee, but true to form, I had no local currency (Euros) and didn't think they would accept a credit card. Cathy didn't want to climb the lighthouse anyway, so I didn't push it. As we headed back toward our ship, Cathy told me that she wanted a WC. We tried to follow a useless set of signs for a couple of blocks and then headed toward the train station. We saw a WC out-building and also saw the coin slots. I found a bank that was open on a Sunday for changing money and gave



## Stories from Wild Bill

over a \$5 bill I carry to tip shuttle drivers. The exchange lady handed me a 1 Euro coin, a 2 Euro coin, and a tiny copper penny coin. We headed back to the WC outbuilding and found an “out of order” sign on the ladies’ room. Also, we saw that the coin slot wanted to be fed a half Euro coin. I quickly devised a plan. I guessed correctly that the slot would accept a 1 Euro coin without giving change, so Cathy and I entered the men’s room together and relieved ourselves. Cathy was done with our little adventure, but as we approached the ship I saw a little ferry going across the inlet. I had noticed earlier that the information center sold tickets for the ferry so we went in and bought four tickets. Soon we were on the other side and walking toward the red lighthouse, just past a marina. By this time, Cathy’s toughness had risen above her sore back and common sense, so she soldiered on for the couple of miles in a strong, cool wind. When we got back to the ferry, I gave the cop on duty the two used tickets by mistake and then argued with him until Cathy reminded me that I had put the unused tickets in another pocket. It’s good she was there, because a night in jail in Germany could have spoiled the cruise for me. We reboarded the ship with no further incident and headed to lunch. I was able to add “Clueless in Germany” to my “Clueless in Spain” earned in 2003.

The first photo shows present-day Bumpass Hell Basin. I don’t remember the boardwalk back in the 40s; we could go right up to

## Stories from Wild Bill

the edges of the boiling pits.

The second photo shows the present-day Lassen Peak Trail, a 7.1 mile loop that I remember hiking several times.

The third photo shows my wife and daughter Katie on the Precipice Trail.

The fourth photo shows me on the Precipice Trail.

The fifth photo shows my wife leading our backpacking group across a snow field in Norway.

The sixth photo shows Cathy on the Keet Seel Trail. I walked part of the way in the stream trying to find quicksand, which I never found.

The seventh photo shows me on the trail during our rim-to-rim hike in the Grand Canyon.

The eighth photo shows my brother Jack and my wife scrambling up Mt. Evans in Colorado.

The ninth photo shows Cathy on a 3.5 mile hike through the desert near where Sergio Leone's "spaghetti westerns" were filmed in Spain.

The tenth photo shows Cathy, with her arms pinned to her sides due to frozen shoulders, Katie, and Tom walking up the road to the ridge of Gibraltar.

The eleventh photo shows an annotated aerial view of Gibraltar.

The twelfth photo shows Katie near Ohara's Battery on Gibraltar.

The thirteenth photo shows Tom on the trail to the top of Mt. Tammany in the Delaware Water Gap.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The fourteenth photo shows our group climbing the Shilthorn in Switzerland.

The fifteenth photo shows Tom and Paul at lunch when we hatched the hair-brained scheme to hike to the end of the valley.

The sixteenth photo shows Tom and I atop Springer Mountain in Georgia, the southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail.

The seventeenth photo shows me at the summit of Wasson Peak, Arizona.

The eighteenth photo shows Cathy on a beach near our hotel in Waikiki.

The nineteenth photo shows the cables going up to the top of Half Dome.

The twentieth photo shows Tom, Katie, and I on the top of Half Dome.

The twenty-first photo shows me, Katie, Tom, and Rachel on McAfee's Knob in Virginia.

The twenty-second photo shows Tom and Katie at Dragon's Tooth in Virginia.

The twenty-third photo shows me on Estes Cone in Colorado.

The twenty-fourth photo shows me with son Bill, Sarah, Katie, Rachel, and Tom at the summit of Turtlehead Peak.

The twenty-fifth photo shows me facing the Las Vegas valley below.

The twenty-sixth photo shows son-in-law Tom and grandson Eric on the hike in Glencoe, Scotland.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The twenty-seventh photo shows me in the kilt I wore for the Glencoe hike.

The twenty-eighth photo shows the green and red lighthouses of Warnemünde, Germany.



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



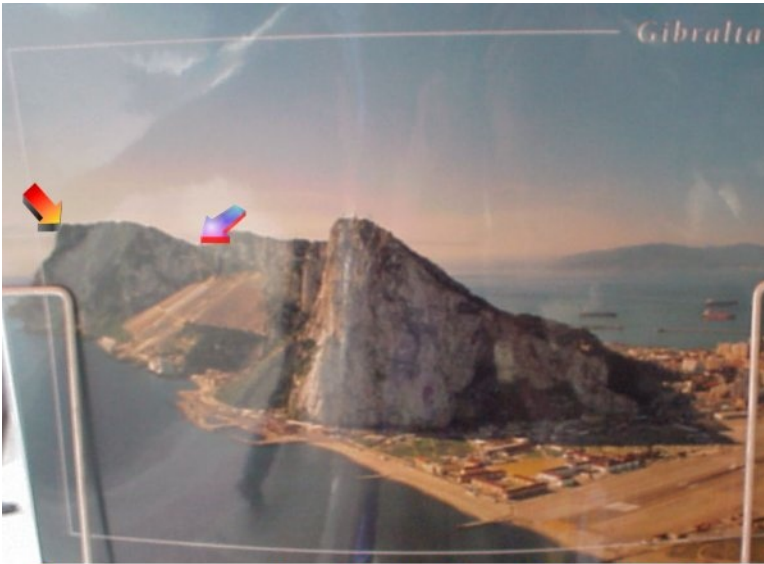
Cathy, an unhappy camper at this moment, trudging along toward Tabernas, a 3.5 mile trek through the desert. The castillo above Tabernas is on the summit of the hill at the left. The pueblo appears white below.



On the way up, the sun broke through the fog. The bay was full of ships and the sky was full of seagulls.



## Stories from Wild Bill

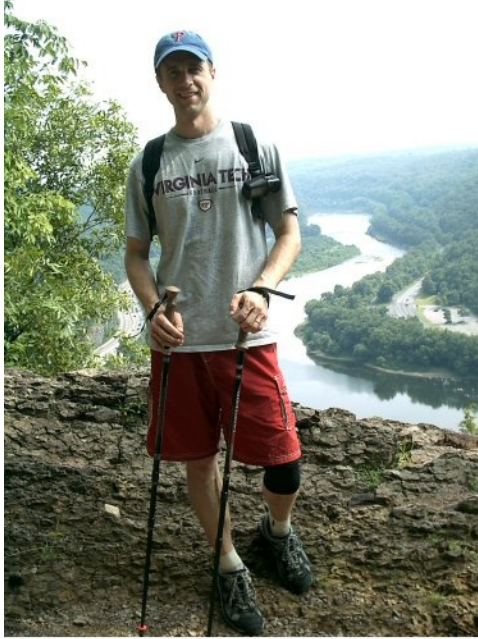


The orange arrow shows the location of O'Hara's Battery. The blue arrow shows the location where the ape stole Katie's sack of water and snacks. We parked in a location well off of the lower right of the postcard.



At the summit of the Rock. Most people don't have a chance to get to this spot because the cabs don't come here.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Tom hiked with his new poles on Mt. Tammany. This spot is about halfway up to the summit.



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



**Bill at the summit of Wasson Peak. A professional photographer, who happened to be on the summit, took the photo.**

## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



**Bill, Katie, Tom, and Rachel on McAfee's Knob.**



## Stories from Wild Bill



**Tom and Katie In front of the Dragon's Tooth.**



## Stories from Wild Bill



**Bill at the summit with Long's Peak in the background.**

## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Trail Running



When son-in-law Tom and I were at the Long Peak/Estes Cone trailhead in Colorado in 2008, we were passed by a woman running up the trail. In all of my years of hiking, I had never conceived of trying to run on a trail that might have rocks, roots, and mud. I did a brief try at cross country skiing on the Appalachian Trail at Big Flat outside of Shippensburg, PA one winter, but it was too daunting to ski for more than a few minutes.

In July, 2009, I was scheduled to run the 2 mile and 5 mile race at Cape May Point as a regular annual event. A conflict occurred as we were due to be in Glen Mills, PA on Saturday. I searched for a running race near Glen Mills for Sunday morning, and found only the Raptor Run on a trail in a nearby park. I registered online. On race day I rolled out of bed a bit before 6:00 AM and dressed for the trail run. I arrived at Starbucks at exactly 6:30 AM as the store was opening. I had a cappuccino and oatmeal

## Stories from Wild Bill

and read the NY Times during breakfast. I arrived at Marsh Creek State Park for the Raptor Run at around 7:30 AM. There were many participants and other park users already on hand as I parked the XTerra along the lake. There had been rain the night before and there was some light rain coming down as I arrived, so I didn't know whether to wear running shoes or hiking boots. I talked with a guy who had run the race several times who advised running shoes. I put on my brand new, never worn, running shoes and walked to the registration area for my bib number and t-shirt. The trail for the race reminded me of portions of the Appalachian Trail: hills, roots, rocks, and mud. I started in the rear of the pack and regretted it as I had to walk for quite a while at the beginning of the race as the masses squeezed themselves onto the trail and went slowly through some muddy sections. Once I got going, I was amazed that I could actually run on the kind of trail that I'd been hiking on for years. I ingested another gel pack, provided by son-in-law Tom, after the first 5 mile loop of the run. I had taken his first gel pack before the race started. I finished in 1:49 for the 10 miles and enjoyed the whole experience. The new shoes functioned beautifully and got very muddy. I was hooked on trail running.

In mid-August 2009, I ran my first half-marathon in the Half-Wit Half in Reading, PA. This was a trail told by an idiot. early. Race morning came early at 5:30 AM. Cathy and I made it



## Stories from Wild Bill

to breakfast at 6:00 AM in our Hampton Inn in Wyomissing, PA. I had two bagels with peanut butter and honey, two cups of coffee, and a 20 ounce bottle of G2. We went back to the room, packed, and checked-out. We arrived at the race site at 7:15 AM. I was first in the registration line (for pre-registered). About 30 minutes before the race start, I drank a bottle of G2 and had a Gu pack. The race started at 9:20 AM after the race director administered the “Moron’s Oath.” I carried two bottles of G2 and 3 Gu packs in my trail running belt. I found the race course to be very grueling, with lots of steep hills. I fell a few times and skinned both knees and my right elbow. I also stumbled down to my hands. On one of the falls, I did a somersault. During the last couple of miles, both of my calves were cramping badly. I finished in 3 hours and 47 seconds. I drank 3 bottles of G2 at the end of the race. I showered off with a hose and changed under a towel. We left a big beer bash behind and drove to Pizzeria Uno for lunch. I ate pizza and Cathy had a chicken sandwich. I had a pint glass of Arnold Palmer. We drove home in light traffic and arrived near 5:00 PM. I finally went to the bathroom for the first time since 8:00 AM after drinking 7 bottles of G2 and the 16 ounce glass of lemonade and iced tea. We unpacked and I took a very refreshing outside shower.

In November, 2009, we were visiting son Bill and Stacey at their home in Cumming, GA. Son Bill and I had signed up for a trail

## Stories from Wild Bill

race. Race day started around 5 AM for me and Son Bill as we prepared themselves for the XTerra trail race in Roswell. We left at around 6 AM and stopped at a Starbucks on the way to the race location in a mountain bike park. The run was for two loops of approximately 4.5 miles each. Son Bill and I stayed together for a good bit of the run. I fell 4 times and the third fall was the worst fall I have ever had in any sport (including the broken collarbone I suffered in a bike fall in 1993). Something, possibly a root, caused me to fall over like a tree on the right front side of my body. My right knee and elbow were very bloody, my hip was bruised, some ribs on the right side were cracked or bruised, my upper arm muscles were sprained, and I hit my right forehead. Also, my GPS watch was wrenched from my wrist, leaving blood and bruises in its wake. I scrambled up and started running again. After a while, I noticed that the GPS watch was gone and turned back to find it. Someone picked it up and gave it to me, but I lost 10 minutes or so in backtracking. I had told Son Bill to go on. I finished strongly with a lot of blood on my body. I won a medal by default because the next oldest runner in the 9 mile race was 64. I cleaned up with wet paper towels and then both Bills went to Starbucks on the way home. The Starbucks manager said to son Bill, "Do you know that the guy with you is bleeding?" I still have a scar on my right knee from the fall. The GPS watch was wrecked beyond repair.

## Stories from Wild Bill

I always told people that I'd never run an ultramarathon; I had read too many horror stories of runners pushing their bodies beyond capability. Then, I saw a blurb about a "friendly" 50K called "Blues Cruise", consisting of one circuit of Blue Marsh Lake in Reading, PA. The race director claimed that the race was very doable, so I signed up for the October, 2014 version. I didn't know how to train other than running trails, so I did as much of that as I could. Then I heard about the 12 hour event called "Sloppy Cuckoo", run on trails in Pennypack Park in Philadelphia. The event was held by the same race director as "Blues Cruise" and was described: "The Sloppy Cuckoo 12 hour challenge takes place at Pennypack Park, a beautiful oasis within the city of Philadelphia. We designed a 6.55 mile loop that is very runnable , incorporates georgeous views of Pennypack Creek, offers enough variety to keep you occupied for the entire day and is just easy enough to cover long distances." I decided to go out there and just run a few loops. I stayed the night before in a Hampton Inn in Willow Grove. I discovered that if I ran the marathon distance (26.2 miles) or 50K I would get a handcrafted cuckoo clock showing the distance on it. As the day wore on, I realized that I could make it to 50K and did so. When I got back to the car, I realized that I was brain-fried and exhausted and wouldn't be able to drive back home to Cape May Beach. I called my wife and she suggested that I drive back to the Hampton Inn and try to stay there. I did so. When I registered again, I begged

## Stories from Wild Bill

the desk clerk to give me some bags of pretzels and peanut butter containers used at breakfast. I stumbled to my room, and took a shower. I summed up the day as: “The most amazing thing about Sloppy Cuckoo 12 hour on Sunday was how much coke and Gatorade I drank during the event, how many cookies I ate when I was done, and how I dipped pretzels in peanut butter for dinner in my room at Hampton Inn - all vegan, of course.” I discovered something that would hold true for all of my future 50Ks: my legs were extremely painful throughout the night and magically painless the next day.

A week after Sloppy Cuckoo was the Blues Cruise 50K. Here’s how I described the event to my coach Nikki: My goal was simply to break the 8 hour cut-off for the race, not to see how fast I could run the course. I lined up near the back of the pack, but had some people behind me. If you’ve checked the GPS track, you probably noticed the 3300 feet of elevation gain. My quads felt every inch of it. I stayed conservative, with walking the ups and running the flats. I did my best to run the downs, when it wasn’t too dangerous. I got to the halfway point in 3.5 hours, still not sure if I would meet my goal time for the race. I ran to the 26.2 mark in just under 6 hours and knew that I had 2 hours to go the last 5 miles. Although there were still some bad hills ahead, I power-walked most of the rest of the way. My legs were still capable of running, but I figured I could stay away from injuries

## Stories from Wild Bill

by walking. Ironically, I fell the only two times in the whole event while doing the power walking. I think my speed walking gait keeps my feet close to the ground, which caused the falls. On one of the falls, I scraped my knee a bit, but no problem. When we got within a half mile of the finish, I started to run again, and actually had a pretty good sprint-in at the end. I felt a lot better at the finish line than I did in the Philly Half this year. Last weekend's Sloppy Cuckoo really helped me. I finished in 7:21 and was 247 out of 336. The oldest guy that beat me was 65. I was the only runner above 68 in the race. Overall, I did a great job with hydration and nutrition. There were 7 aid stations, approximately 4 miles apart. I started with two 7 ounce bottles of Heed and a bottle with 21 Endurolyte capsules. I also carried 2 Clif Bars. At the aid stations, I asked for Gatorade refills for my empty bottles. Between aid stations, I drank one bottle between 1 and 2, and then both bottles the rest of the way. I also took 3 Endurolytes between aid stations. I drank a cup of Gatorade at the first 3 aid stations, and drank a cup of coke at the rest. I ate a small PB&J sandwich at the first few aid stations, and then started to eat cookies at the rest. Halfway up the biggest hill on the course, around mile 21, I stopped and ate a Clif Bar. My left knee started to hurt early on, so I took 2 Ibuprofen tablets at aid stations 4-7. My stomach felt good the whole way.

## Stories from Wild Bill

In 2015, I ran Blues Cruise again. From year to year the race course switches direction and this year seemed harder to me. I finished in 7:43 and was 265 out of 291. The oldest guy that beat me was 64.

In September, 2016 I ran another 12 hour event, Labor Pain in Reading, PA on Mt. Union where the Half-Wit Half was run. The course consisted of a 5 mile loop. I completed 50K and was the first male 70+.

In October, 2016, I was unsuccessful at Blues Cruise: “DNF today after 12.5 miles today. I was getting my butt kicked by the hills and saw my pace drop from 14:07 after about 5 miles to 15:30 at the third aid station. I needed to average 15:28 and I knew that I wouldn’t be improving it as the day wore on, so I quit at that point and hitched a ride with a spectator to the next aid station and then another ride with a volunteer back to the start/finish. I reported my DNF to the RD and headed back to the hotel with Cathy. I know I was doing the best that I could, but it wasn’t good enough today. I always feel blessed by what I can do at my age, but, on the flip side, I don’t worry about what I can’t do.”

In 2017 and 2018 I ran Labor Pain and attained the marathon distance.

Pemberton 24 - A Festival of 5Ks - 2019: I’d been wanting to do a 24 hour event after I had done a number of 12 hour events and

## Stories from Wild Bill

50K ultras. I guess I was looking for a next step. A running friend from the Certified Running Nuts posted a link to Pemberton 24 and I immediately signed up. I started to formulate plans and soon realized that I would need a support team to get me through the event. I knew I would need the A-Team, so I messaged my old buddy Howie Bell and asked if he still supported crazy ventures. Howie had been with me for the Rum Runner kayak race in the Keys in 2001 and the 160 mile RAIN ride in 2011, so I thought he was almost due for another one. Howie and his wife Paulette signed on. Howie had given me a big boost during my running of the NYC Marathon in 2017. While he was waiting in Central Park for Paulette to run by, he yelled at me to finish strong, causing me to pass many runners on my last 3 miles to the finish. My first idea was to use trekking poles and power hike each of the loops, but as I trained with the poles I felt that I was expending too much energy for too little speed. I changed my strategy to a Galloway run/walk with a series of 4 minutes running and 2 minutes walking. A few weeks before the event I used that 4/2 system for all of my training runs and weekend races. I did a bunch of training sessions on the Gordon Pond Trail in Cape Henlopen State Park and culminated with a dress rehearsal where I did six 5Ks, the first two in the dark. I attended a practice run a week before the event.

I did a week-long taper while I gathered gear and came up with a detailed “script” for the event. I averaged about 8 hours of sleep

## Stories from Wild Bill

per night and ate a well-balanced diet. On Friday, September 20, I arrived at Pemberton Park around 4pm and checked-in. My pre-paid campsite was #14 where I set up camp. Howie and Paulette arrived by 6:30pm and we got ourselves ready for the event.

Lap 1 (7pm): We gathered in the start corral shortly before sunset, so there was still some daylight. It would be dark in the woods before I finished the lap, so I wore my headlamp and knuckle lights. There were lots of roots and some mud on the course. I fell once, but my kneepads and gloves kept me injury-free. The end bit of the lap was a small hill, a short distance of dirt road, and a grassy run-up to the finish arch. I made sure to at least run the last bit at the end of each lap.

Lap 2 (8pm): This was the first lap in total darkness. At the end of each lap, either Howie or Paulette was there, cheering me on, and giving me fuel and drink.

Lap 3 (10pm): The mud got worse each lap.

Lap 4 (11pm): Still feeling strong.

Lap 5 (1am): I rolled my ankle on a muddy root. I bent over, hands on legs to gather myself. "It's the end of the event for me, I thought," but I kept going and the pain went away.

Lap 6 (2am): I was spooked by rolling my ankle and decided to try my trekking poles. It was a disaster; I couldn't keep up a fast enough pace to finish in an hour, so I picked up the poles and ran/walked in with them in hand.



## Stories from Wild Bill

Lap 7 (4am): I was getting bleary-eyed from the early fog rolling in and hours of staring at the trail. At the finish was the beautiful visage of a fog-shrouded Paulette in her orange NYC Marathon parka. I told her that I needed to go to their hotel for a hot shower and to stay off the course until 8am. Poor Howie was in the hotel room trying to catch a couple of hours sleep when Paulette called to wake him and get him to pick us up. I got my hot shower, 15 minutes lying atop the bed, and a half cup of coffee. Then we were back to the fray.

Lap 8 (8am): It was daylight and I felt good after the shower and change of clothes. We had a little chicken dance before the start. This was a good lap.

Lap 9 (9am): I struggled with this one and could hardly make it around. I had reached the marathon distance and I wanted to quit, but my crew knew I had one more in me, and knew I wanted to get to 50K. They told me to take 2 hours off. Paulette was wearing her 2017 NYC Marathon cap and told me to wear it at noon. I dug out my 2017 NYC Marathon running shorts and my blue compression socks. Paulette also advised me to change into another of my 3 pairs of trail shoes. I had been running in my new Hoka Speedgoats and changed into my Solomon trail shoes. I used my “The Stick” roller and did some stretches..

Lap 10 (noon): Thanks to my support team, I was really psyched for this lap. I moved at a good pace and kept telling myself not to leave anything on the course. When I got to the last bit of the lap,

## Stories from Wild Bill

I picked up speed and finished strong. I had reached 50K and was done and done for. The support team and I relaxed for a while. I got a patch for the event and presented it to Howie and Paulette. They were great!!!.

The first photo shows me ready for my first trail run.

The second photo shows me finishing my first trail run.

The third photo shows my dirty shoes after my first trail run.

The fourth photo shows me in a pack at the beginning of the Half-Wit Half.

The fifth photo shows son Bill and me running on the XTerra trail early in the race.

The sixth photo shows me with my battle wounds from the Battle of Big Creek trail race.

The seventh and eighth photos show me on the trail at my first Blues Cruise 50K.

The ninth photo shows my finish at my first of two Blues Cruise 50K.

The tenth photo shows me on the trail at my second Blues Cruise 50K.

The eleventh photos shows my finish at my second Blues Cruise 50K.

The twelfth photo shows my setup at Labor Pain.

The thirteenth photo shows me running the Labor Pain course.

## Stories from Wild Bill

The fourteenth photo shows the camp setup for the Pemberton 24.

The fifteenth photo shows the course of each 5K of the Pemberton 24.

The sixteenth photo shows me in the start corral for the first 5K of Pemberton 24.

The seventeenth photo shows my lights at Pemberton 24. The glasses were to protect my eyes from branches.

The eighteenth photo shows me finishing a lap at Pemberton 24.

The nineteenth photo shows me finishing 50K at Pemberton 24.



Bill ready for his first trail run, the 10 mile Raptor Run. (Note the new shoes.)

## Stories from Wild Bill



Bill just finished the Marsh Creek Raptor Run - 10 miles on a trail.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Bill's new running shoes after the Raptor Run.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Bill in an early bottleneck in the Half-Wit Half.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Bill and Son Bill at XTerra Battle at Big Creek.



## Stories from Wild Bill



Bill bloodied but not beaten  
after the race.



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



# Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill





Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Kayaking



When my wife Cathy and I built our home on the Delaware Bay in 1995, I wanted a way to get out on the water from our beach. I had never sailed before (still haven't), but I decided to buy a small two person sailboat. I researched thoroughly and picked a model that I wanted to buy. I located a store in Annapolis, MD and drove there, intending to have a sailboat on my roof rack for the return journey. When I entered the store, all of the staff ignored me for several minutes. That interim gave me a chance to have second thoughts, so I left in a huff and drove back to New Jersey. On the ride back, I remembered some discussion of kayaks that I'd read somewhere, so I researched again and found that a marina in Somers Point, NJ sold Ocean Kayaks. I think our son Bill rode with me when I purchased a hot pink Malibu Two tandem kayak and carried it home on our rooftop. I also purchased two inexpensive paddles and a couple of life vests.

## Stories from Wild Bill

My daughter Katie was staying with us with a friend. The day after the kayak purchase, they wanted to be dropped off in Cape May and wanted a pickup later in the day around 4pm. When I got home, I rigged the seats in the Malibu Two for solo paddling, dragged the kayak down to the water, and headed south toward the Cape May Canal, three miles away. It was an easy paddle down to Whaler's Cove, a beachside restaurant, two miles away, but I decided that I better turn around and paddle back in order to meet Katie and her friend on time. Guess what I hadn't thought about? TIDES! There was a strong current heading south down the bay toward the ocean and I could barely make any progress paddling against it. I completely wore myself out getting home. I hustled down to Cape May for the pickup and just made it. I had learned a few things: 1) I needed seats for the kayak to save my back and quads; 2) I needed gloves to avoid blisters; 3) I needed a single kayak for paddling solo; 4) I needed to learn about tides and currents in the Delaware Bay. The next day I went back to Somers Point and bought a single yellow Ocean Kayak Scrambler and two kayak seats. I located a tide table for the lower Delaware Bay and learned that the incoming tide heads north toward Philadelphia and the outgoing tide heads south toward the ocean. The time span between high and low tide is approximately 6 hours. The tides at the full and new moons are highest and lowest and the current is correspondingly stronger. At the half moon, there is a neap tide which is weakest.

## Stories from Wild Bill

I also learned the rule of 12s: in the first hour after high or low tide,  $1/12$  of the water moves; in the second hour,  $2/12$  of the water moves; in the third hour,  $3/12$  of the water moves; in the fourth hour,  $3/12$  of the water moves; in the fifth hour,  $2/12$  of the water moves, in the sixth hour,  $1/12$  of the water moves.

At first, my favorite route was down to the ferry jetty, three miles away. The paddle was most enjoyable when I left an hour before low tide and then turned around. I wore green gardening gloves which were quite visible from the shore, so locals recognized me as I paddled by.

I got a bit more adventurous and started to paddle down to the concrete ship, a wreck offshore of Sunset Beach, just north of Cape May Point. I also started to explore the bay front to our north. When the weather started to get cold, I remembered what the surfers wore in the winter back in 1988 when we were on sabbatical leave on the Cape May oceanfront. So I headed to a surf store in Ocean City (NJ) and bought a 5mm wetsuit, booties, and warm gloves. When ice came to the bay, I went out when possible. I remember one day when I paddled into the middle of a floe of icebergs and followed the floe out to the ocean and back. On days like that, even the ferries didn't run, so I was on the bay by myself.

## Stories from Wild Bill

As we got more familiar with the area, I got to know Mike and Lisa Bernstein, who owned a kite shop on Beach Avenue in Cape May and also ran a kayak tour and sales business called Aqua Trails, located in Cape May Harbor. I also met Jeff Martin, a marine science teacher, the lead tour guide at Aqua Trails, currently owned by Jeff. I went on some of the Aqua Trails tours and learned about the salt marsh environment. Subsequently, I filled in and guided an occasional tour. I managed the Aqua Trails website for some years.

Cathy went with me in the double kayak from time to time. On Christmas vacation in Key West in 1996, we went on a kayak tour with our children, beginning a string of many vacation paddles.

At some point soon after I began to paddle, I wanted to paddle across the Delaware Bay. I knew from riding the Cape May/Lewes Ferry that the bay was about 11 miles wide from Cape May Point to Cape Henlopen, Delaware. I felt that the distance was well within my range. I had heard rumors of lifeguards that had crossed the bay on paddle boards. On Labor Day Weekend in 1996, we bought a 24 foot boat we named "Anaerobic." Cathy and I both signed up for the boating course offered by the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Cathy scored higher on the certification exam, but I passed also. We learned a lot of valuable information for boating and also for my kayaking. Chart reading and rules of navigation were skills that I still use.



## Stories from Wild Bill

### PADDLE ACROSS THE BAY (1997)

I met Craig Forrest during the summer of 1988. My family and I were on sabbatical leave from my professorship of mathematics and computer science at Shippensburg University; we were spending eight months in a condominium on the oceanfront in Cape May to “test drive” the area for a possible permanent move in the future. Craig was one of the regular lifeguards on the Grant Street beach that we frequented daily. Craig was a high school student and a well-known local surfer at the time. Unlike some teenagers, Craig was quite willing to engage adults in conversation and we chatted with him on a daily basis. That summer, Cape May hosted the national lifeguard competition. Craig was entered in the beach run event and he asked if I would cheer for him. I positioned myself at the edge of Grant Street beach and cheered as Craig raced by. I met Craig’s mother, Libby, and we talked a bit about Craig and the race. At the end of the summer we took a snapshot of Craig on his guard stand; the photo remains part of our scrapbook for that year.

During the summer of 1997 we started to hear about a lifeguards’ trip across the bay. The same day in July we all discovered that Craig Forrest was organizing a benefit for his mother Libby, who is suffering from Lou Gehrig’s Disease (ALS); a group was going to paddle across the bay! On August 5, I went into the Cape May Lifeguard headquarters building to inquire about the event; I was

## Stories from Wild Bill

told that Craig was guarding Steger's Beach, so I went to the beach to find him. I reintroduced myself to Craig and asked if I could be a part of the event. Craig graciously accepted me and my offer of the use of our powerboat as one of the support craft for the crossing. Two of the Aqua Trails tour guides, Jeff and Phil, also arranged to be part of the group, so I decided to help them get over to Delaware with their equipment. Mike gave me an Aqua Trails tank top to wear , so there were to be three of us representing, and sponsored by, Aqua Trails for the event.

The week prior to the crossing, I made two training paddles: the first was a sixteen mile trip to Reed's Beach and back to my house; the second was a thirteen mile paddle from my house around Cape May Point, along the Cape May beaches, into the Cape May inlet, and up the harbor to the Aqua Trails kayak dock. When I arrived at the kayak dock, I arranged to trade in my Ocean Kayaks Scrambler XT for a Necky Kayaks Dolphin. I thought I was ready for an upgrade and the upcoming trip was a good motive for doing it now. Cathy picked me up in our Jeep and we loaded the new kayak on the top. The first water that the Dolphin would taste would be in the ocean off of Cape Henlopen on Sunday.

On Saturday, we met with Jeff and Phil at Aqua Trails to get their kayaks. Jeff loaded two Sea Lions belonging to Mike and Lisa on his truck and we headed for our marina. In a feat of

## Stories from Wild Bill

packing-engineering, we put the two 17' Sea Lions side by side through the open windshield of our boat, "Anaerobic". Then we put my Dolphin on top of them.

### THE MAIN EVENT

This was it - the big day! I awoke around 5:50 AM and packed for the trip. Cathy and I arrived at lifeguard headquarters in Cape May at 7:45 for the 8 AM briefing. The other participants dribbled in during the next hour and a half. During the wait, Craig executed a dramatic rescue of a youngster trapped in the rough surf on Grant Street beach; that child was lucky - in the presence of his parents he was swimming before the lifeguards came on duty. We finally left for the marina around 9:30. We ended up with ten passengers: me, Cathy, Kim and Katherine the rowers, Jeff, Phil, Tracy (Jeff's wife), Joe (another kayaker), Deacon Kline (the alternate captain of "Anaerobic"), and Josh (Deacon's grandson). We headed out of the Cape May Canal with the boat laboring under the weight. It was really hard to bring up to plane. We moved out to a spot about a mile off of Cape May Point to wait for the other powerboat, "Emotional Rescue II". That boat had to pick up a Cape May lifeguard boat packed with kayaks and other equipment. We finally saw the boat coming through the rips pulling the rowboat at about 11:15. We headed out across the bay with our boat struggling to maintain its hydroplaning configuration. When we arrived at Cape Henlopen,

## Stories from Wild Bill

we rendezvoused with a sailboat named “Santa Cruzin” which had a couple of paddleboards and paddleboarders on board. We three boats converged about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile off of the ocean beach at Cape Henlopen State Park. It was an impressive landing party with its five paddleboards, six kayaks, and a lifeguard boat. Once onshore, Craig’s stepbrother John and wife Tara assembled a portable “suitcase kayak” while the lifeguards slapped hands and got each other pumped up for the trip. After answering questions of curious beachgoers and holding hands for a send-off prayer, we embarked at about 12:30, heading for Cape May. The weather was sunny and hot with a gentle breeze. Since we left on the remnant of an ebb tide, we were pulled farther out into the ocean for a while. There were five-foot ocean swells of very clear water, but the paddling conditions were excellent. We saw a huge freighter that passed about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile away. Also, I saw a brown pelican flying low over the water. The “Emotional Rescue II” led the fleet. Most often, the rowboat was next in line. I was usually up front somewhere, too. The paddleboarders struggled a bit since even these superb athletes couldn’t match their hands against the blades of a paddle or an oar. Some of the paddleboarders took brief breaks under tow of one of the three boats, but for the most part they used their hands and hearts to move them toward New Jersey. Two of the kayaks also spent a small amount of time under tow. After about three hours, I spotted the Cape May lighthouse looming in the haze. Soon

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afterward, we began to see the raging whitewater of the rips. I had experienced nightmares about fighting the full moon currents that race around Cape May Point on a flood tide. At this time, as we entered the maelstrom of the rips, the group had split into two parts: one part was following the rowboat and the other was following “Emotional Rescue II” closer in toward the Point. Two paddleboards, one kayak, and the other two boats were in the outer group with the rowboat which lost three oars in the rips. Our group surfed through some interestingly rough water. One of the paddleboards kept being overturned by hydraulics. I noticed that our group wasn’t making any forward progress. In the past two years, I’d been defeated three times trying to traverse the rips against the current and I was determined to win the battle today. So I broke away from our group, paddling frantically for the east side of the concrete bunker in Cape May Point State Park. After some brutal paddling, I made it in close to shore where I noticed the huge waves pounding the beach. I paddled just outside of the breakers and made it to the cove jetty just as “Anaerobic” dropped off two paddleboarders it had been briefly towing. I could see the rowboat back behind me, so I waited for them. Actually, the current carried me back to them. When I reached the rowboat, I could see that it was inching backwards in spite of the valiant efforts of its crew. I told the captain of “Santa Cruzin” about their situation and he guided them out into a lesser current

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where they could progress. Meanwhile, I struggled back to the jetty where the four paddleboarders were forming up for their grand entrance onto the lifeguard headquarters beach at Grant Street. I fell in behind them. There was loud cheering on the beach as the paddleboarders landed in the rough surf and the loudspeakers carried the announcement of the accomplishment. Still offshore, I carefully stowed my hat and Gatorade bottles into the middle hatch of my Dolphin and headed to shore on a big wave, encouraged by applause from the beach. As I was proudly surfing into the beach, paddle overhead, I saw that the wave was about to smash me on a storm outflow pipe, so I dove off of my kayak in one of my patented wipeouts. Guess what I forgot to stow? My prescription sunglasses were lost in that wave (I had lost another pair while kayaking in Key West the past December). I recovered my paddle and kayak at the edge of the water and dragged the kayak and myself onto the sand at 5:53 PM.

I stayed on the beach long enough to see the rowboat and double kayak arrive and to congratulate the participants. Cathy had told me earlier that Deacon didn't want to pilot our boat back into its slip, so I had to kayak out to the boat and board it. I struggled in the crashing surf and succeeded on my fourth try to escape beyond the breakers. Beaten up and without glasses, I boarded the boat while the crew brought the Dolphin on board. There was

## Stories from Wild Bill

so much fog at the Point that the lighthouse was barely visible. We could see a storm coming so we headed for the boiling rips. I was too tired to be as nervous as I should have been traversing the rough water. We made it safely through and headed down the canal, accompanied by the rumble of thunder and flashes of lightning behind us. We arrived at our slip uneventfully and all hustled like crazy to close the boat and load the kayak on the Jeep. We had to drop Deacon and Josh back in Cape May before we raced the storm to our house. It was a tie, so the Jeep stayed out in the rain overnight. The thunderstorm was intense; we could only wonder what it would have been like to have been caught by it on the water.

I continued to kayak throughout the winter of 1997/98 as usual. For the most part, the winter paddles consisted of six-mile trips from home to the Cape May Canal and back. Occasionally I paddled in Cape Island Creek or other inland waters as well.

On Monday, June 1, I stopped at Joe Link's home to talk with him about kayaking. Joe is a well-known runner in these parts. He runs a daily ten-mile route, competes in many races, and has completed fifty-seven marathons. Joe had just purchased a sea kayak and was beginning to train in his usual energetic manner. I told Joe that I planned to paddle across the Delaware Bay sometime in August. He retorted that he bought his kayak for just that purpose! We agreed to do some joint training paddles

## Stories from Wild Bill

both for fun and to prepare for the paddle across the bay. The next day I paddled around the island. The trip was windy and a bit rough and took five and a half hours. On June 11, I kayaked to Dias Creek, a round trip of twelve and a half miles. On June 15, Joe and I had our first joint paddle up to Dias Creek. We went all the way up to the Route 47 bridge before turning around. We battled a strong South wind all of the way home. This was about a fifteen mile round trip.

For a long time I have wanted to kayak to Jake's Landing on the Dennis Creek. I easily talked Joe into the event. By means of measurements on a chart of the bay and my GPS, I estimated the distance from home to Jake's Landing to be thirteen miles. On June 27, Joe and I started up bay with a 10-15 mph west wind and 2-3 foot waves that became 3-4 foot waves. We stopped at Goshen Creek for a GPS reading. We were jumped by swarms of greenhead flies. Luckily I brought some Off so we were able to protect ourselves. Dennis Creek was a mile to the north. We relaunched into the waves and headed up bay. There is a large white lighted marker at the huge mouth of the creek. Because of a flawed map that I had looked at, we made a wrong turn and, after a few miles of paddling and turning, we ended up at Route 47 near mile marker 15.5 (the Jake's Landing turnoff is at mile marker 20.5). We called Maria Link on my cell phone and she picked us up in their truck.



## Stories from Wild Bill

On Thursday, July 16, I did a “twofer.” In the morning I went out for a kayak paddle down bay. I wore a PFD with my new submersible radio attached. It was interesting listening to the traffic. At the concrete ship I encountered some dolphins, a rowboat, two other kayaks, and “Big Red”, the whale-watcher. A parasail boat was operating off of the canal mouth. I paddled to the second jetty at Cape May Point and turned around. Fish were jumping all over the place. In the afternoon, I paddled up bay to Green Creek. Although the bay was clear, I could tell from the radio that fog had settled in on the canal, harbor, and point.

One of my wilder ideas for a kayak paddle was to go to the East Point Lighthouse at the mouth of the Maurice River. Nothing is too wild for Joe, so on July 19, Joe and I headed up bay at the beginning of the flood tide. Around Del Haven we saw a bunch of Manta Rays splashing and swimming at the surface of some very shallow water. They were quite near to us. When we got near Bidwell’s Creek the water became rougher and stayed pretty rough the rest of the way. We paused a few times for a drink of water but didn’t land anywhere the whole trip. The terrain from Dennis Creek to East Creek is beautiful and pristine. Farther up there are broken and abandoned houses and trailers – very ugly. Thompson’s Beach has some inhabited dwellings and one newly built house. We finally arrived at East Point after almost five hours of paddling. We paddled nineteen miles at an average speed of four miles per hour. My phone was at the edge of a cell

## Stories from Wild Bill

but I walked around amidst the greenheads until we could call Maria for a pickup.

On July 30, Joe and I paddled around the island. It was a lovely trip with flat water, well-timed currents, and some dolphins in the ocean. We completed the 21 mile trip in 4.5 hours. We felt ready! I had trained with lots of shorter kayak paddles, including an 11 mile round-trip paddle to Pierce's Points on August 20.

On Friday, August 21 we made our final plans for the paddle across the bay. Brian Batdorf, a Pennsylvania high-school junior who summers in Wildwood Crest would bring his kayak to the ferry terminal to meet the Jeep. The kayaks would all go over by ferry. Alex, Phil, Katie, and Bill all arrived to support the effort.

Sunday, August 23 was the big day. Did I sleep at all? My alarm went off at 4:30 AM. I showered, dressed, had a cup of coffee and two granola bars, and headed for the marina in the RAV. I bought ice and opened the boat. Phil, Katie, Maria, and her friend Marianne got on the boat. We picked up Bill at the gas dock and were off up the canal at about 6:20 AM. Meanwhile, Cathy and Alex picked up Joe in the Jeep and went to the ferry terminal. They met Brian and loaded his kayak on top of the other two. On the boat, we had the lights on since it was still a bit dark. To my great relief, when we got to the canal mouth, we could see about three miles through the fog, and could see the MV Cape May heading across the bay. We quickly caught up and followed in her wake into Breakwater Harbor. We headed for Lewes town beach. I

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swam in from about 100 yards out. A few minutes later, Cathy, Joe, Brian, and Alex arrived in the Jeep. Joe accidentally released a bungee cord that cut Cathy's forehead. I dried myself and lathered up with sunscreen and got ready to go. We launched at 8:16 AM. We went to the left of the icebreakers and then headed on a course of 50 degrees. We maintained the course as we drifted north with the flood tide. As we began to drift south, we aimed at our house until we spotted the North Cape May water tower in the haze. Joe and I battled the current into Whaler's Cove for a 4.5 hour total time. Brian and Anaerobic arrived about 15 minutes later. Joe's neighbor Jim and his wife Sue formed a welcoming committee of two. Perfect crossing!

In the days followed the crossing, I designed a commemorative tee-shirt and had the Flying Fish Studio produce thirteen of them. I gave a tee-shirt to each of the participants and also to Katie's husband, Tom, who supported the effort from Virginia.

Joe Link and I crossed the bay with various others in 1999, 2000, 2001 (twice), 2003, 2007, and 2008. We double-crossed the bay (over and back) with various others in 2003 and 2010, when I was 70.

In October, 1998 Joe and I joined a trip organized by Peter Lomax for a Wildwood Island Circumnavigation. We had to wait for a while to start due to fog on the ocean. The trip started out through the Cape May Inlet and then north along the beaches of

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Wildwood Crest, Wildwood, and North Wildwood and into the Hereford Inlet, which was pretty dicey with six of the kayaks overturning. We had a SeaTow support boat for the 20 mile trip.

In September, 2000 and then again in 2002, Joe and I paddled out to Brandywine Shoal Lighthouse, about 9 miles out in the Delaware Bay, right on the edge of the Channel. On the second trip, we had a third paddler with us. When we lived in Cape May Beach, the blinking red light of Brandywine was visible when I was in bed at night, so these trips were quite special to me.

In April, 2001, I was introduced to kayak camping on an early spring trip to Assateague Island in Maryland. We needed to bring all of our own supplies, including water. We spent a few days of very chilly paddling where we saw no other humans, but did see a lot of ponies.

in July 2001, Joe and I had the chance to join a group of kayakers doing a Manhattan Island Circumnavigation. This was a 30 mile trip starting at a New Jersey state park near the George Washington Bridge. I thought I knew New York City, but this was a new perspective.

In November, 2001 I joined a three day kayak race from Key Largo to Key West called Rum Runner. I enlisted my buddy Howie Bell to support my effort. Unfortunately, I only lasted for the first 30 mile leg due to a 20 knot cross-wind and my lack of a

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kayak rudder. I was flipped out of my kayak passing under a bridge toward the finish line and my kayak blew away. Luckily, I had my marine radio in my life vest and was able to hail a support boat which also recovered my kayak.

In July, 2002 Joe and I ran the 5K race Sister Blister in Avalon, NJ and then joined Bruce Jenkins for an circumnavigation of Absecon Island, which holds Longport, Margate, Ventnor, and Atlantic City. The course around was a challenging 30 miles with two tough inlets.

On our 2006 Panama Canal cruise, Cathy and I had two kayaking excursions that were notable. The first was in a pond which had bioluminescence as we paddled in the dark in Puerto Rico. I got in the water at one point and the whole outline of my body was aglow. The second was near the famous El Arco in Cabo san Lucas at the bottom of Baja California.

Starting in February, 2009 and continuing for three more winters, I joined a group of New Jersey paddlers, led by our guide Pam from the Outer Banks, for four nights of kayak/camping in the 10,000 Islands of the Florida Everglades. These were wonderful adventures with great company and an abundance of nature on white sand beaches and mangrove-lined waterways.

In the summer of 2010, Jason Malick, a marathon swimmer, contacted me about hiring me to kayak alongside of him as he

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swam around the circumference of Cape Island. He had seen my web page about kayaking around Cape Island and knew that I had done that circuit dozens of times. I told him that he couldn't hire me but I would help him with his quest of the first swim around the island. I rounded up Joe and another kayaker for support and we all met to plan the journey. We had some cancellations due to weather, but finally got it done. The course was 15 miles which took 7 hours. I had my first experience with feeding a marathon swimmer.

In October 2010, I entered the Broadkill River Race in Delaware. This is a 10 mile swim up the river to Milton, DE. I launched my kayak at a boat ramp in Lewes, DE and headed up river for 3 miles to the race launch. I raced 9 miles up to Milton by cutting tangents really well. After eating lunch with Cathy and good friends John and Diane Hartnett, I paddled the 12 miles back to the boat ramp. I was pretty brain-fried and had a hard time putting the kayak atop my car. I called Cathy and told her I would be a while. I paddled the race a couple of more times with different kayaks.

In October, 2011 I supported Jason on his attempt at the Ederle swim from Sandy Hook to the Battery. This was a quite challenging water event for both the swimmer and the support kayaker. We had a power boat accompanying us and had some communication problems with the Captain concerning the

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proper course. My understanding was that the Captain knew the best route, but he made it longer than necessary. Also, the start of the race was delayed. The aforementioned two factors caused Jason to meet the tidal change 1.25 miles before the finish and he started to be defeated by the current. The race director came by in his boat and told Jason to quit After 8 hours of swimming. I was feeding Jason again.

In March, 2012 I took on the Everglades Challenge Ultramarathon, a 67 mile paddle from Fort DeSoto, near St. Petersburg, FL across Tampa Bay and south on the ICW to Englewood. I did a lot of training around Naples and from Englewood north on the ICW up to Sarasota Bay. One day I launched in the afternoon from the Rock Creek kayak ramp in Naples and paddle out Gordon Pass to the Gulf and north to the fishing pier, then south to the end of Keywadin Island, where I landed to watch the sunset. I waited until it was pitch dark and paddled up the ICW and Naples Harbor back to Rock Creek. This was a 36.5 mile round trip. The day of the ultramarathon, the wind was blowing about 20 knots from the south. The six mile crossing of Tampa Bay was very rough and tortuously slow. There was little letup on the ICW. When I got to Sarasota Bay the waves were huge. A weather front was due to come through overnight, so I crossed to the eastern shore of Sarasota Bay and landed my kayak. I called the race director, told her where I was

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and hired a support person to pick me up and haul my kayak to the finish, where my car was waiting. I got home around 3am. Another DNF.

In 2013 my friend Jason told me about a wonderful athletic challenge and charity moneymaker called Paddle for a Cause. The event was hosted by the Dean Randazzo Foundation to support the families of cancer patients. The race started in the Atlantic City Marina. The 22.5 mile course around Absecon Island was intentionally a tough one. The paddlers, mostly on paddle-boards, were asked to think about the suffering of cancer patients while suffering out on the course. To make things tougher, there was a “super-moon” and corresponding king tides to contend with. The two inlets were roaring with water rushing out to the ocean. The Longport Inlet had following seas and the Absecon Inlet had a head-on current. I was flipped out of my kayak when I hit the confused water over a lump just outside of the Longport Inlet. Luckily, a paddle-boarder came over to steady my kayak so I could climb back in. I just barely made it into the Absecon Inlet and was totally exhausted when I finished in second place in the open division. I paddled the event in 2014 and came in second again in the open division. 2016 was my third time doing the event in honor of my brother Jack, who had esophageal cancer. The first two times I did the 22.5 mile circumnavigation of Absecon Island. I was going to do the same



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this year, but I broke my rudder completely off of my kayak on last Monday and wasn't sure if I should face the wind and following seas without checking out myself and the watertightness of my kayak in this way. So, I opted for a shorter option, an 8 mile out and back paddle to Wonder Bar. I started the paddle chatting with another geezerly type in a kayak, but noticed two guys on SUPs who were really seriously booking and leaving us behind. I decided to try to catch them. They stayed ahead of me for over 7 miles, but both ran into trouble with the wind and current near the Brigantine Bridge. I was the first paddler to finish the 8 mile paddle in 2:08. The second paddler was 61.

In July, 2014 Jason asked me to be one of his two support kayakers for his Manhattan Island Swim, one of the triple crown for marathon swimmers. My job was feeding Jason; Pat, the second kayaker, was responsible for keeping us on course. We also had a support boat with Jason's race manager and Lisa, his fiancée aboard. It was a beautiful day for the circumnavigation, which started at a marina in lower Manhattan. I remembered from my previous Manhattan circumnavigation that there is a time gap waiting for the tide to turn at the confluence of the East and Harlem Rivers, so, for a while, Jason could not make forward progress even though we had him right against the wall on for a while. Eventually, the tide turned. When we reached the Hudson

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River, the current was very fast. We were accompanied by marine police in a Zodiac for the final leg. The police made us wait for a cruise ship to depart, causing us to duck into a cove for a while and Jason to tread water. Finally, after 10 hours and 45 minutes, Jason and the support boat headed into the finish and Pat and I paddled down to another marina. Pat and I knew that Jason was going to propose to Lisa on the dock where he finished, so we hustled over there on foot. The proposal was a great way to conclude this event.

The first photo shows our “beach shack”, that we called “Baie Chalet”, a nod to the fact that the plans that we chose for our house was for a mountain chalet, “chalet” is a French word, and the word for “bay” in French is “Baie”.

The second photo shows our first two kayaks with me and our friends, Jack and Sue Beatty.

The third photo shows one half of the wreck of the concrete ship “Atlantis”, located off of Sunset Beach. At present, the wreck is almost completely eroded.

The fourth photo shows the concrete ship at sunset.

The fifth photo shows the scrambler and ice on the bay.

The sixth photo shows me dragging my kayak through the snow down to the beach.

The seventh photo shows me with part of our group on a kayak tour in Key West in 1996.

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The eighth photos shows me paddling the Necky Dolphin across the bay in 1997.

The ninth photo shows Joe Link on his first bay crossing in 1998.

The tenth photo shows the bow of the Anaerobic and me on my second bay crossing in 1998.

The eleventh photo shows my 18' kevlar kayak with the CapeMayBeach.com decal that I used for the 2000 and 2001 crossings.

The twelfth photo shows Peter Lomax with some of the kayaks preceding the Wildwood Circumnavigation.

The thirteenth photo shows me at Brandywine Shoal in my 18' kayak.

The fourteenth photo shows me a Brandywine Shoal in my 16' kayak.

The fifteenth photo shows me with our group kayak/camping in Assateague Island.

The sixteenth photo shows me with some wild ponies on Assateague Island.

The seventeenth photo shows me with the GW Bridge in the background.

The eighteenth photo shows me launching in Key Largo during Rum Runner.

The nineteenth photo shows a bit of Cathy's life jacket as we headed for El Arco in Cabo.

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The twentieth photo shows launch day for kayak/camping in the 10,000 Islands.

The twenty-first photo shows us paddling the waterways of the 10,000 Islands.

The twenty-second photo shows Jason finishing his swim around Cape Island.

The twenty-third photo shows me at the start of the Broadkill River Race.

The twenty-fourth photo shows me at the start of the Broadkill River Race.

The twenty-fifth photo shows me passing the Romer Shoal Lighthouse with Jason in Ambrose Channel during the Ederle race.

The twenty-sixth photo shows my kayak cockpit during the 36.5 night paddle in Naples.

The twenty-seventh photo shows the lineup before the start of the 67 mile Ultramarathon paddle from Fort De Soto.

The twenty-eighth photo shows my Cobra kayak that I used in the 2013 Paddle for a Cause.

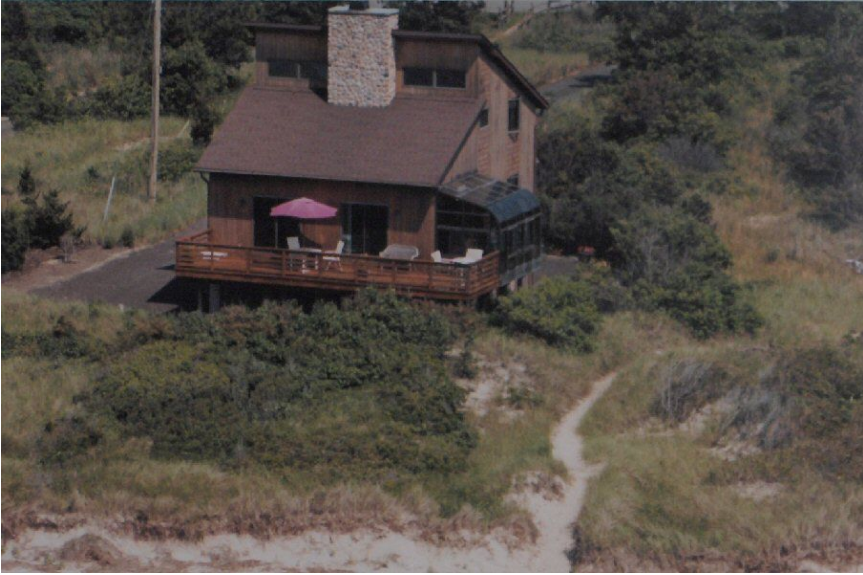
The twenty-ninth photo shows me with Dean Randazzo at the award ceremony in 2013.

The thirtieth photo shows me with my awards in 2013.

The thirty-first photo shows me starting the 2014 Paddle for a Cause.

## Stories from Wild Bill

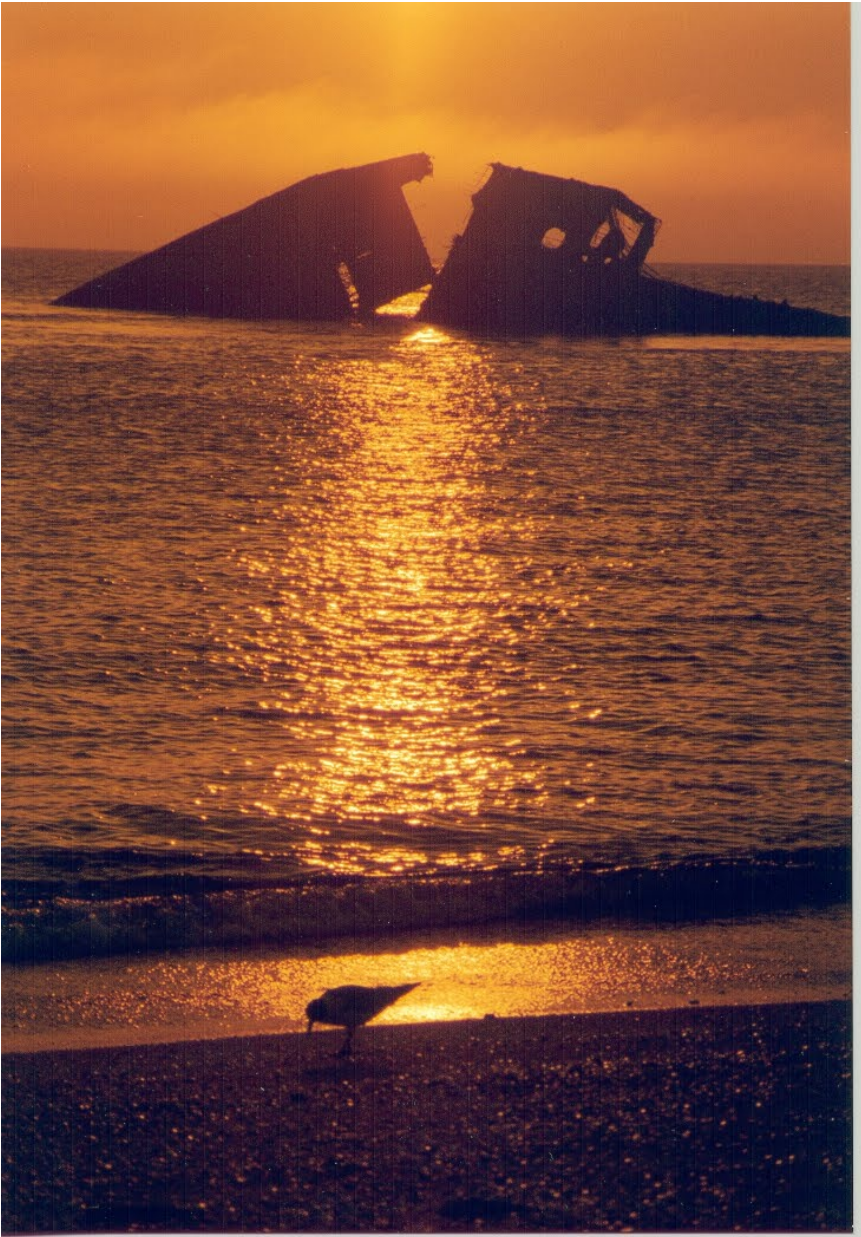
The thirty-second photo shows Jason and Lisa at their engagement following the Swim around Manhattan.



## Stories from Wild Bill



Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill





## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Swim



I took Red Cross swimming lessons at the municipal pool in San Mateo, California starting at age 6. My parents loved having me out of the house, so they enrolled me several times each summer until I was 12 years old. I never really took to the crawl, or freestyle, stroke and preferred the breast stroke and side stroke. I never learned the butterfly stroke. I was a strong, but not fast, swimmer and swam in lakes when the family went camping.

As a teenager, I continued to swim in pools and lakes. I enjoyed body surfing in the ocean, but didn't do much swimming. As an adult, I swam when I could, mainly in pools and lakes. When Cathy and I went to Bar Harbor with the kids, we often stayed at the Frenchman's Bay Motel. I used to sneak into the pool, in the dark, late at night and swim laps (quietly).

I love to snorkel and have mainly done it on cruise excursions. I did one scuba dive on the Great Barrier Reef.

## Stories from Wild Bill

When I decided to compete in triathlons, I realized that I needed to become more comfortable with freestyle. I joined YMCAs in Delaware and Florida and did workouts prescribed by my coach Nikki, who had been a swim teacher and coach at YMCAs. Later, when I was designing my own training schedule, I concentrated on long pool workouts. In Delaware I was lucky to get involved in an open water swim group that met at Lake Como in Smyrna, DE.

As of this writing, I have competed in 18 triathlons, only three of which were in fresh water; the remainder were in brackish or salt water. Eight of the triathlons had ocean swims. I liked salt water for its buoyancy, and I liked the ocean for its adventurousness. Three of the triathlons involved jumping from a ferry into the Delaware Bay.

The following photos are a sampling from the swim portion of triathlons.



## Stories from Wild Bill



# Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill





# Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill



## Stories from Wild Bill

# Bike



I remember my Dad pushing me as I set on his too big bike for my first short ride. I was too small to get off of the bike, so I aimed for a lawn and crash-landed. I received my own kid-sized bike as a birthday present when I was around 8 years old. I loved bike riding up until I got my driver's license the day I was 16. I remember riding down to watch the Schuylkill Expressway being built in 1953-54 when I was 13-14 years old. On one of those rides, coming back in my neighborhood, I caught my foot in a wheel, went down, and hit my helmet-less head on the curb, knocking me out cold. I remember a passerby reviving me and talking to me. I eventually remounted the bike and rode home. Back in those days we didn't have bike helmets.

After graduate school, while we were living in Shippensburg, PA, I bought a nice Schwinn 10 speed bike at a shop in Carlisle, PA. I used to ride the bike to the university campus and to the grocery store.

## Stories from Wild Bill

At some point during the 80s, Cathy and I both bought Trek mountain bikes from the same bike shop in Carlisle. We enjoyed riding in town and especially out of town on rural roads. I decided that I wanted to ride up on South Mountain to the area at the top called Big Flat. I talked Cathy into accompanying me on the ride up the mountain a few times, but I never got her into my more interesting, long rides up and down mountains, on fire roads, in dry creek beds, and to state parks north and south of Shippensburg. I created a bunch of scenic rides up to 75 miles long, including a ride over two mountains to Gettysburg Battlefield and back over one mountain on U.S. 30 to Chambersburg and then north on U.S. 11 back home.

I decided I should do a “century” on my bike. I calculated that a ride on U.S. 11 just south of Martinsburg, WV would be 50 miles. I packed up some food and water and headed south on U.S. 11. I got about 10 miles down the road when I got a flat tire. I had a patch kit, but discovered that my pump didn’t work. I thought of quitting for the day, but instead I walked the bike a couple of miles to a gas station. They got me back on the road. When I got into West Virginia, the road started to narrow with no shoulders and a lip at the edge, not bike friendly. In addition, the motorists got ruder. I managed to go 50 miles and stop in a park for lunch and a break. On my way back north, I stopped at a bike shop in Hagerstown, MD for a new pump. Century done!



## Stories from Wild Bill

When I had crossed the Potomac River on my century, I noticed the C&O Canal and its tow path below. Cathy and I began to carry our bikes down to the tow path on the back of the car and ride east or west on the tow path for a couple of hours. After a few of those trips, I proposed that we ride the whole 180 miles of the tow path in a three day trip. Cathy agreed, but said she wouldn't camp and didn't want to make reservations to stay more flexible. I agreed and also said that I would carry all of our gear and supplies in the same manner as we hiked. That trip was a doozy of an adventure. Our daughter Katie supported us by transporting us to and from the ends of the ride.

Cathy and I enjoyed biking around the Jersey Shore after we moved to the Cape May area in 1995. One day following a hurricane which left us with a 40mph north wind, we drove our bikes to the north end of Ocean City and let the wind blow us home on Ocean Drive about 45 miles. Then we jumped into the other car and picked up the first one. Quite a day.

One day we rode our bikes to the Cape May/Lewes Ferry, crossed to Lewes, DE and rode down DE 1 to Ocean City, MD. a 72 mile round trip. I remember the part of the trip through Seashore State Park when Cathy rode way ahead of me and chewed me out for riding slowly. I had been looking at all of the birds along the way.

## Stories from Wild Bill

One of our favorite rides was from our house to Cape May Point, about 11 miles away. Then, we would walk the beach to Louie's Pizza in Cape May, about 3 miles. We'd eat lunch and then reverse the course.

We went through a few mountain bikes and then got beach cruisers, which we called "geezer bikes." Since our rides were flat, it didn't matter much. I like to drive my bike to Wildwood Crest in the winter when the beach was frozen and then ride along the water's edge to North Wildwood and back, about 6 miles. I never saw anyone else on the beach on those cold days.

In about 2009, I decided that I want to compete in a duathlon (run, bike, run). My son-in-law Phil had been competing in a triathlon in Sea Isle City which earned money for veterans. I wanted to do the duathlon there. I didn't think that my geezer bike was appropriate, so I wanted to buy a road bike. However, I wasn't sure that I would enjoy the duathlon, so I didn't want to spend much money. I looked up "cheap road bike" on Amazon and found one for \$264 which I bought and had shipped to Rock Creek RV Resort in Naples where we were in winter residence. I had to put the bike together somewhat and managed to put the front wheel on backwards. When I got on to test ride on our lawn I crashed right off. What a great omen for beginning multi-sports!

## Stories from Wild Bill

In 2010, on Memorial Day Weekend, I road my Amazon “Rapido” in the Sea Isle Duathlon. I wore my old fatigue jacket in honor of the vets and was clipped-in on the bike like a big boy. I averaged 17.7mph during the 8.8 mile bike ride and found out that I loved to compete on a bike.

I did another duathlon at BellePlain Forest and again averaged 17mph on a 15 mile bike course. Once again, I loved competing on the bike, but coveted more speed. I signed up for the Tri the Wildwoods duathlon feeling the need for a new bike.

I found Dave’s Road Bikes on Facebook and sent a message to Dave Moses, the owner. He was friendly and helpful, so I scheduled an appointment to meet him at his shop in Dover, DE. Dave fixed me up with a Janis tri-bike. During the test ride with Dave, I was very happy with the speed and handling of the bike.

I was very happy with my Janis during Tri the Wildwoods duathlon and averaged 19.3mph on the 10 mile course with many turns. I rode the bike well and the bike handled well. It was a good outing and I was hooked on duathlons.

I decided to try something longer and signed up for the Bassman half-distance duathlon in Bass River, NJ. The bike ride this time was on a 58 mile course through the New Jersey Pine Barrens. I averaged 17.9mph and felt very good about it.

## Stories from Wild Bill

Next, I competed in the Cape Henlopen sprint duathlon. I averaged 19.7mph on a tricky 14 mile course. I was feeling like I was in a good groove with my duathlon racing. The bike course was practically in my back yard as we lived just across DE 1 from Lewes, the host town.

I really liked the longer bike ride of a half-distance duathlon, so I signed up for the Gator Half duathlon in Sarasota, FL. I averaged 18mph on a 54 mile bike course through the woods. There were only 6 competitors in the duathlon, so I was getting the feeling that duathlons were on the decline and that I should think about adding swimming to my training so I could enter triathlons in the future.

I entered Du Dover sprint duathlon for May, 2011, just after we Snowbirds arrived in the north. It was a super-sprint with just an 8 mile bike ride, but I averaged 19.2mph so didn't feel too bad about it.

In June, 2011 I did the Team Bricks duathlon at Lake Como in Smyrna, DE. I averaged 19mph for the 13 mile bike course and averaged 25.3mph for the 5th mile.

In June, 2011, while training for the RAIN in July, I wrote: "Got an early 6:00 AM start and did my 100 miles. 97 degrees when I finished around 1:10 PM. Both inner thighs cramped on last 10 miles. 1st 40 miles @ 16.4 mph, 2nd 40 miles @ 15.9 mph, last

## Stories from Wild Bill

20 miles @ 15.5 mph.”

My son Bill asked me to join him in participating in RAIN (Ride Across INdiana), a 160 mile bike ride mostly on U.S. 40, done in one day. This was son Bill's second time at RAIN. I asked my support Guru, Howie, to help Cathy in providing SAG (Support And Gear) for the event. Here's what I wrote about the two days in Indiana: “Friday, Bill was up early to put a plastic box with the dirty clothes bag and bike cover on top of the XTerra. He also mounted his old helmet on top of the box as a decoration for RAIN. We ate breakfast in the motel and headed for Richmond, IN at 8:30 AM. We met Son Bill at a Tim Hortons. We had some coffee and then moved Bill's bike and gear to our car. We had to use some clever Physics to prevent the two bikes from banging into each other. We parked Son Bill's car near the finish line and then drove the RAIN route on U.S. 40 to Indianapolis. We ate at a Red Robin. Then, we drove U.S. 40 to Terre Haute, where we picked up our packets at the Drury Inn. We drove to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods and checked-in to our very primitive dorm rooms. We headed out for a sushi dinner at a Japanese restaurant and then went to Krogers for supplies. We all managed to turn-in early in preparation for a big day ahead. Saturday, was a big day for all of us. It was a very successful day with Son Bill doing an awesome non-stop ride at 21 mph, Bill making it through the day in 12 hours with a 15.4 mph moving average, and

## Stories from Wild Bill

Howie and Cathy performing magnificently as a SAG team. Bill was thrilled that Son Bill hung around for his finish. Bill gave Howie his finisher's keychain as a symbol of his essential role in Bill's finishing. We parted ways with Son Bill and motored on to the La Quinta in Columbus, where we shared a pizza for dinner. We all slept well."

October, 2011: "Today was the Cape Henlopen Duathlon. It's funny that Coach Nicki mentioned that I might not sleep on Saturday night. I hardly slept a wink. I wasn't worried about anything, but I was so wired from the Broadkill River Race that I just couldn't drop off. My problem with duathlons is that I leave everything on the bike course. I never hold back. I was really happy because I finally had a race where I averaged over 20 mph on the 12.5 mile course (I did 20.8). My first run was slower than I thought it would be. I didn't have a problem with the Great Dune hill, but my legs didn't feel right, maybe due to lack of sleep, maybe because I actually use my legs when I kayak fast, they pump the whole way. I felt fabulous on the bike and passed a lot of people on the course and was aggressive as hell. When I took off on the 5K run, my legs just said "WTF!", so it wasn't very pleasant and definitely not fast. A 70 year-old came down from Lansdale because he saw that there were two of us in the age group. He beat me by 5 minutes, so I came in 2nd in the age group out of 3."

## Stories from Wild Bill

In March, 2011 I did my second Gator Half duathlon. I wrote: “Since it was raining, I didn’t wear sunglasses on the way out for the bike leg. Luckily, in the torrential rain, we didn’t have any turns on the route except for the exit from the park. I saw at least 10 flats and other mechanical problems. I was carrying a spare tire in a bottle cage, but didn’t need it. The rain persisted for about 15 miles. I averaged 18.2 mph for the first half of the ride and then faced a tough headwind for the whole way back. My helmet and bike numbers blew off. I averaged 16.8 mph for the entire 58 mile ride. The wind and some nasty hills combined to trash my quads.”

Except for two Christmas Sprint duathons in Naples, FL in 2015 and 2016, I switched over from duathlons to triathlons. The main difference on the bike was riding the bike while soaking wet and dripping sinuses.

I decided to do the Team Bricks triathlon in June, 2012 as my first. My son Bill traveled from Georgia to Delaware to do the event with me. My bike guy, Dave Moses, owner of Dave’s Road Bikes in Dover, provided son Bill with a bike for the occasion. Son Bill and I both made the podium for our age groups. I finished 75 of 151 on the bike, so I had to pass a lot of people out on the bike course. I had a lot of fun passing people. I passed one of the guys in my age group about a third of the way through the course. I wasn’t happy with my 18.6 mph average speed, but I was pleased

## Stories from Wild Bill

and surprised with my 83 rpm average cadence.

In July, 2012 I did the New Jersey State sprint triathlon. I was in the 62nd percentile for the bike leg of 11 miles, averaging 19.1mph: “The ride was good and I passed a lot of other riders. I was hoping for 20 mph, but some wind and some small hills slowed me. I was pleased to note that I hit 25 mph a couple of times on the ride. Also, I was happy that I stayed aggressive and fearless for the whole ride.”

In August, 2012, I was back in Wildwood the the Tri the Wildwoods triathlon. I hit the 70th percentile on the 10 mile bike course: “No rain, but wet roads made the bike ride a little dicey. It was also very crowded. I brought out my old cab driver mentality and remembered that I’m a Jersey driver and fearlessly got into the mix. I passed a lot of people on the 4 loops on Central Avenue. I had wanted 20+ mph, but settled for the 18.8 on my GPS when it was over.”

In December, 2012, I headed to Key West for the TriKW sprint triathlon. I was in the 69th percentile on the 12 mile bike course, averaging 18.2mph: “The bike course was a two loop out and back route. The road was a bit rough and the bike traffic was congested, but I enjoyed the bike leg as much as I always do.”

In January, 2013, I did my first Olympic length triathlon with HITS Naples. I averaged 18.3mph on the 25 mile bike course. I



## Stories from Wild Bill

had dedicated my race to my friend Tom Cox, who had passed on in the evening of the night before. I had written “Tommy” on my right thigh as a sign of the dedication. I wrote: “I thought only a flat tire could make me a DNF, but at mile 6.5 of the bike leg I was very nearly hit by a car trying to sneak through the filter of Collier County Sheriff officers protecting the intersection of Vanderbilt Beach Road and Logan Boulevard. We had been promised that we could burn through all of the intersections at full speed and I was counting on that. Luckily, I saw the car sneaking through and heard police whistles and shouts. I slammed on my brakes and skidded to keep from being killed. Another rider wasn’t so lucky earlier in the race. An elite triathlete male from Naples was barreling along at 31 mph, down in his aerobars, when he crashed into a car which had pulled out of an unprotected side road on Golden Gate Boulevard. The guy was in hot pursuit of the eventual winner of the race, totally focused on getting every ounce of speed out of his bike and himself. He flipped over the car, landed on his back, and broke a couple of bones in one hand and his wrist, got massive road rash, and some sort of leg injury. I remember several times during the bike ride looking down at my right thigh to see if Tommy was still aboard with me. I started to “talk” with him about the race, asking him strategy questions such as, “Do you think I should save anything for the run?”; I could hear his southern drawl telling me to “do whatever you think is best.” Of course I

## Stories from Wild Bill

thought it best to hammer it out on the bike and crawl the run leg of the race if necessary; that's how I've always ridden duathlons and triathlons. My highlight of the ride was crossing U.S. 41 on the way back, down in my aerobars, at 23 mph, which is fast for me. Vanderbilt Beach Road, after it crosses U.S. 41 and has gone by the shopping center containing my local bike shop, Naples Cyclery, not to be confused with My Bike Shop Dave's Road Bikes of Dover, DE, turns into a two lane road. The beach traffic was at its usual weekend density and there was no bike lane. I was trying to come in another half mile or so to the bike dismount area and wanted to average about 21 mph on the stretch. But some of the cars ahead were ignoring me and squeezing me. Instead of slowing down to save my life, I kept coming strong, yelling "Get Over!". Somehow I made it unscathed. As I dismounted, I smiled at the thought that I would finish the race. It is inconsequential, but I beat the other guy in my AG, a 69 year old with USAT age of 70, and also beat the only guy in the 65-69 age group. The main thing is that I finished an Olympic length triathlon."

In June, 2013 I stepped up to the EagleMan 70.3 Half IronMan. This was the epitome of my multi-sport career: "I think that I wondered if I would ever complete a half IronMan. The year leading up to EagleMan had been filled with injuries: groin pull at Philly MuckRuckus, cracked ribs before Philly Half Marathon,

## Stories from Wild Bill

kayak ramp slip the day after the HITS tri, arthritic knee pain, and plantar fasciitis causing me to cancel two half distance triathlons in March and May. During the 56 miles on the bike, I had a long time (longer because of slowness) to think about that. I think that I slipped into the mode of surviving the event instead of being willing to bleed from my eyes to do the best that I could. My main impression of the bike ride was being passed by young men and women charging by on their expensive bikes. Secondarily, it was a beautiful course to ride, with little traffic other than a few rednecks blasting by in their pickups. The wind bothered me more than it should have. My son Bill taught me to concentrate on the fact that I'm clipped-in as I charge into the dismount point. The muddy run-in with the bike was disgusting. The muck was 8 inches deep. Normally, at this point in a triathlon, I feel comforted by not missing the swim cut-off, and not getting a flat tire on the bike leg. I feel sure that I'm going to finish. Not this time, because I wondered about my right foot hurting from a hot spot.”

In July, 2013, I went back to the NJ State Triathlon, this time for the Olympic distance. This was a hot day! The bike leg was 23miles which I covered at 17.4mph. The highlights were: 1) Coach Nikki putting the finisher medal around my neck at the finish 2) I, being brain-fried, almost forgot my bike when we were leaving the venue 3) Driving from Princeton, NJ to

## Stories from Wild Bill

Williamsburg, VA in a horrible T-storm that lasted for hours in the dark.

In August, 2013, I did Tri the Wildwoods sprint triathlon again. The bike leg was 10 miles that I covered at 18.2mph.

In December, 2013 I was back in Key West for TriKW olympic length triathlon: "I mounted my bike without incident and sped out of the mount zone, heading toward Boca Chica Key. I did my usual hacking and spitting of salt water from my sinuses as I went. I drank some Heed with Gel from my "sippy cup" to get some quick energy and some plain Heed to hydrate a bit. The roads were very well protected by cones with lots of police and volunteers manning intersections and turns. The route had a long loop of about 18 miles and a short loop of about 6 miles. The road surface on U.S. 1 was in the worst condition and the bridges put us into a head wind on the way out and a nice tail wind on the way back from Boca Chica. I pressed hard during the entire bike leg, felt strong, and rode efficiently. I averaged 18.5 mph for the 25 miles. My official time for the bike was 1:20, 33 percentile."

After a brief retirement from multi-sports, I registered for the St. Anthony olympic length triathlon held in April, 2015. This is a large and famous triathlon held in St. Pete Beach, FL. The swim, largely against the current, was exhausting and left me little in

## Stories from Wild Bill

the tank for the bike leg. I rode the 25 mile bike course at 17.1mph.

In June, 2015 I got to do my dream triathlon: Escape the Cape Olympic length. This amazing event, held in North Cape May, NJ, involves jumping off of the Cape May/Lewes Ferry to swim a mile to shore to start. The bike leg is two loops of fourteen miles each on roads that I had biked on for many years when we lived three miles north of the Cape May Ferry. The course involves many turns and goes up and over the West Cape May Bridge twice in each loop. I knew a lot of the cheering fans along the route.

In August, 2015 and August, 2016 I was back at Tri the Wildwoods olympic length triathlon.

In September, 2015, I did the Bethany Beach Sprinternational triathlon. The bike leg was on DE 1 and went over and back on the Indian River Bridge, which is a tough climb.

In June, 2016 and June, 2017 I was back at Escape the Cape olympic length triathlon with two different bikes, a full carbon Felt in 2016 and a Specialized mountain bike in 2017.

In December, 2016 I did another TriKW triathlon, this time a sprint, in Key West.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Cathy holding onto my bike as we rode the C&O Canal towpath.

## Stories from Wild Bill



My first Duathlon in Sea Isle City.

## Stories from Wild Bill



My daughter Katie calls this “the gun show” as I ride my second duathlon in Belleplain.



## Stories from Wild Bill



Finally on a tri-bike for my third duathlon in Wildwood.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Son Bill at RAIN.

Stories from Wild Bill



Me at RAIN.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Son Bill and I after 160 miles of riding at RAIN. We finished several hours apart.



Stories from Wild Bill



Cathy and Howie's SAG wagon for RAIN.

## Stories from Wild Bill



A long bike ride in the rain at the Gator Half duathlon.

Stories from Wild Bill



My second tri-bike in action.

## Stories from Wild Bill



My bike racked the day before the EagleMan 70.3 IronMan.



# Run



Cathy and I both started running while on Sabbatical Leave at Duke in 1977. We had made it a habit of power walking in the morning after dropping the kids at their schools. We often walked the trail at the Duke golf course. One day when I was out on the trail by myself, I started to run and kept going for about 3 miles. Shortly afterward, Cathy joined me in a daily run which evolved into a 6 miler.

When we returned to Shippensburg, we found a lovely, hilly 5 mile loop in town which we regularly ran. For a while, I ran to the university campus with a backpack carrying my clothes, books, and notebook, always in the dark. As part of that run, I stopped at the dark cinder track behind the old gym and ran a mile. One morning, a barking dog that I never saw ran a loop behind me before it got bored.

I was not interested in competing in running races while I taught at Shippensburg University. I was playing a lot of handball and

## Stories from Wild Bill

racquetball while a faculty member. We usually played close to the lunch hour and often showered and dressed along with a large group of faculty runners, who competed in races frequently. I probably put in the same amount of weekly running miles as the competitive runners.

My first competitive race was a 10K sponsored by the university ROTC at the 1987 Homecoming. I ran at a 7:59 min/mi pace. Running near me for most of the course was one of my students, an all-American diver on the university swim team, who was suffering from a massive hangover. We would chat for a while and then he would go to the side of the road to have some dry heaves and then catch up with me. With about 1/4 mile to go he sprinted to the finish.

When we moved to the Cape May area in 1995, I started to get more involved in running races. My kayaking buddy Joe Link was an avid runner whose daily run was 11 miles long. He regularly competed in races from 5K to marathon. The south Jersey running scene was a very active one and I got engaged in it. A local running race was somewhat of a social event which made it more fun to do.

I mostly ran 5K races with an occasional 5 miler or 10K. When the Ocean Drive Marathon started up as a March event, I ran a 10 miler. Then I discovered another 10 miler in Sea Isle City that I

## Stories from Wild Bill

ran a couple of times.

I didn't run on the beach too often, but there was a Sandblast 5 miler in Avalon that I often ran barefoot. Also a Plunge for the Patients in Wildwood had a 5K that I also ran barefoot a few times. Preceding these races I would spend several days training barefoot on the beach between the Cove in Cape May and the Lighthouse in Cape May Point.

On November 5, 2000 I ran the A to Z 10K from Camden (NJ) Aquarium to the Philadelphia Zoo with my son-in-law Phil. It was a fabulous course, but a chilly and windy day, especially harsh while running over the Ben Franklin Bridge as the wind blew down the Delaware River from the North. The race was unfortunately discontinued the next year because of security concerns after 911.

When we moved to Lewes, Delaware, I started to run two races per weekend during the summer and its shoulder seasons. The Seashore Striders and Races2Run organizations are both the best I've ever seen. The social aspect of the running scene was awesome.

Coincident with our move across the Delaware Bay was my participation in half-marathons and marathons. I regularly ran the Philadelphia Half Marathon in the fall. I also looked for opportunities to travel to races and ran a half marathon in Miami

## Stories from Wild Bill

Beach on Halloween day 2010. I walked for about 4 miles to the start of the race, where we waited out a torrential rain. During the race, it was sunny and hot. I beat every runner over 59 that day at age 70.

At the time of this writing, I still hold the 70-74 age group course record for the Bottle and Cork 10 miler in Dewey Beach, DE. The next weekend I placed second in my age group with a 1:52 in the Philadelphia half marathon.

I try to run three times a week, one Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays.



My first race shirt.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Finishing the run leg at TriKW under the watchful eye of my support team Cathy.

Stories from Wild Bill



Running with my brother Bob.



## Stories from Wild Bill



Looking like I need a meal.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Cathy and I in Havana for the half marathon and 5K, respectively.



## Stories from Wild Bill



Son Bill and I finishing the first race we did together in Avalon, NJ.

Stories from Wild Bill



One of my favorite races in Key West.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Son-in-laws Phil and Tom, my brother Jack, niece Julie, sister Joan (who puked at the finish), and I at a race at the Cape May County armory.

## Stories from Wild Bill



This is me suffering through a humid 5K in Honolulu.



## Stories from Wild Bill



Son-in-law Tom, daughter Katie, me, Cathy, daughter Alex, son-in-law Phil, and granddaughter Erin at Race for the Cure in Philly.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Daughters Katie and Alex with me at a race in Stone Harbor, NJ.



Son Bill and Bill after the Atlanta Marathon.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Son Bill and I at a beach run at the Jersey Shore.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Great family turnout for the Sandblast Run near my 70th Birthday.



## Stories from Wild Bill

### Bottle & Cork Ten Miler Records

Bottle & Cork		Ten Miler Men			
Age Group	Name	Time	City	State	Year
9 & Under	Xavier Catillo	1:26:35	Falls Church	VA	2007
10 - 13	Kaleb Lamaire	1:21:34	Rehoboth	DE	2005
14 - 18	Stephen Garrett	54:18	Hockessin	DE	2013
19 - 24	Dylan Smiley	51:41	West Chester	PA	2019
25 - 29	Joseph Norton	56:47	Collingswood	NJ	2010
30 - 34	Mike Carrigitto	55:08	Laureldale	PA	2005
35 - 39	Mike Monagle	54:35	Wilmington	DE	2004
40 - 44	Jason Reed	57:45	Brisbane	CA	2019
45 - 49	John Tuttle	56:06	Villa Rica	GA	2005
50 - 54	Brandt Chi	1:02:53	Rehoboth Beach	DE	2017
55 - 59	John Costello	1:05:12	Middletown	DE	2017
60 - 64	Ivan Avendano	1:10:04	Boothwyn	PA	2009
65 - 69	Bennett Sweren	1:10:58	Lutherville-Timonium	MD	2021
70 - 74	William McArthur	1:21:03	Villas	NJ	2010
75 & Over	Henry Gunther	1:34:50	Wilmington	DE	2015

My age group course record.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Cathy at the finish of a 5K in Costa Maya, Mexico on our running cruise.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Granddaughter Rachel, me, and daughter Katie after the Princess 10K at Disney World.

Stories from Wild Bill



Granddaughter Rachel and I showing off our medals.

# Bingo



When we moved into our house in Cape May Beach in 1995, we joined the Saint John of God Catholic Church in Town Bank. We weren't steady church goers and had a couple of rules: 1) No church during boating season when we had the Anaerobic; 2) No Sunday pancakes at Uncle Bill's or Dock Mike's unless it was after we had attended mass that morning. One morning at mass, our Pastor announced that they needed help at Friday night Bingo. Cathy and I had never played Bingo, but we thought that it would be a good way to meet people, so we volunteered. For the first year or so, we worked the floor, calling numbers up to the caller after someone had called "Bingo!" We would return home reeking of cigarette smoke although we didn't smoke. Sometimes we would shower afterward to get rid of the stink.

After a couple of years, one of the Bingo honchos asked me if I'd like to call. After I'd opted in, I had to go through a bit of an apprenticeship, sitting next to one of the established callers,

## Stories from Wild Bill

seeing how everything worked. Soon, I was calling on my own. It was very nerve-wracking because the hardcore Bingo players take it very seriously and don't forgive mistakes of any kind. The upside was that I was now a member of the Bingo elite. I relished it. In the past, I'd been a Sunday school teacher, along with Cathy, in Pennsylvania and a school board member for ten years, two years as president. So I knew the perks of the elite.

We helped at Bingo for about six years. When our son Bill and daughter-in-law Stacey wanted to marry in our church, we were able to smooth the way. For example, our pastor never allowed Saturday afternoon weddings, but he permitted ours. Within a year after the wedding, we had quit Bingo and quit the church.

We didn't play Bingo until we were on a cruise with two granddaughters who wanted to play.



# Aerobics



Cathy and I always liked to exercise, so when a gym, Super Fitness, came to Shippensburg about 1979, we joined. The main thing of interest to us was the exercise classes, led by a variety of teachers, especially Rhonda Beamon. The regulars at the aerobics classes were a close-knit social group. We started with “dancie” aerobics, then high intensity aerobics, and then step aerobics.

Cathy and I often did 2 or 3 aerobics classes a day. Before Cathy left a day of teaching at Fannet-Metal high school, she would change into her aerobics clothes and drive over the mountain to the gym before heading home.

When we came to Cape May in 1988 on Sabbatical leave, we joined Body Mechanix, an aerobics studio. We found Carol Ann and Jeanie, the owner, to be the best instructors of high intensity aerobics. We used to try to go to a couple of classes a day and met another social group of fitness fanatics, particularly Linda Keech.

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I managed to get certified as an aerobics instructor during that time. Cathy and I joined Jeanie in a TV studio in Wildwood and made an aerobics video to advertise her gym. Our son Bill hated that his schoolmates in the second half of his Junior year at Lower Township High School would see his parents in their spandex often on the local TV station.

When we returned to Super Fitness in Shippensburg in the the fall of 1988, I taught a few aerobics classes time and again. When we traveled with a tour group to the British Isles in 1989, I taught aerobics classes, sans music, several times during the two week trip. As the years passed, step aerobics replaced high intensity aerobics, but not before I was re-certified as an instructor.

Step aerobics was often done on Reebok steps with one or two risers for elevation. I regularly used 5 risers and have never met anyone else that has done that. Rhonda was our main instructor for step aerobics, but often college students would also teach classes.

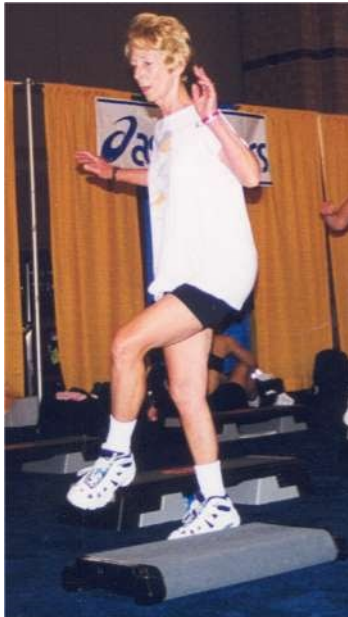
In 1995, when we moved to Cape May Beach, we were happy to exercise outside, without a gym, until the weather turned bitterly cold. We joined Ultimate fitness in the Villas, where we met Carol Matthews, our main aerobics teacher for years to come. When Carol moved to North Beach gym in North Cape May, we followed



## Stories from Wild Bill

her. Mark and Becky Chamberlain owned our new gym and Becky and Carol were our main instructors.

Carol and Becky told us about the aerobics convention in Atlantic City held over a spring weekend. We opted in for three years in a row. We went up in a group of 9 who shared rooms, all women and me. We had to have a roommate in with us in our hotel room which wasn't as awkward as it sounds. We used to always have dinner in Angelos, 8 women and me. Sometimes it's a tough life.



Cathy stepping out at the aerobics convention in Atlantic City.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Some of our group at the aerobics convention in Atlantic City with professional instructor. Carol Matthews is the blond at the left.



Our group at Angelo's Tavern in Atlantic City, sharing the room with a bachelor's party.

## 33 Years Sober!



**A** short phrase hiding a long story. The day I quit drinking is one of the major highlights of my life, following marriage to my wife Cathy McArthur and births of our children Alex McArthur Stoops, Bill McArthur, and Katie McArthur Leitch. My mother was an alcoholic who died from that disease as did her father and siblings Al, Chris, and Helen. Only her mother Anna Healy was spared in that family. My father was a hard drinker, spawned by the “fun” of breaking the law during Prohibition. I started drinking when I was 11, raiding liquor cabinets at my and my friends’ houses. We preferred whiskey taken straight and carried in the makeshift flasks of empty hair tonic bottles. The first time I drank, I got drunk. I ate berries off of bushes to mask my breath and stumbled around the block repeatedly to try to sober up. That night at dinner, I kept my head down and stayed mute. My parents didn’t notice that I was drunk since they were too. When my parents moved me from California to Pennsylvania when I was 12, I took the opportunity to reform by quitting drinking and

## Stories from Wild Bill

smoking for a few years.

Drinking was a big part of my life after my mid-teens. I hated the way that alcohol muddled my mind. I did a lot of foolish things while drunk. I had way too many drunken blackouts and a few pass-outs. I finally came to my senses when I was 49 and using wine as a sleeping potion, after consuming martinis or gin and tonics earlier in the evening. I was pushed toward quitting by my wife Cathy and daughter Katie, who were tired of living with a drunk. I quit cold turkey and was free at last. I've never felt better.

# Hurricane Ian 2022



The hurricane season had been very tame until Hurricane Ian started to threaten the Gulf Coast of Florida in the waning days of September, 2022. My go-to-guy for hurricanes is Joe Bastardi, who I followed on Twitter until his politics became too much for me during the Covid pandemic. As Ian headed across Cuba, I decided to follow Bastardi again on Twitter for self-preservation. Joe usually gives a nod to the Euro model rather than GFS as a hurricane nears. He had forecasted landfall at Cape Coral in Lee County, while the National Hurricane Center was predicting a Tampa landfall, causing Governor DeSantis to issue a required evacuation of parts of Hillsborough and Pineallis Counties. The Euro model trended down the Gulf Coast as the days moved on and alerted us to the possibility of a close encounter in Central Florida as Ian crossed over the peninsula. We stocked up on bottled water and Lara Bars.

## Stories from Wild Bill

We spent a couple of days preparing for power outages and days of isolation without access to supplies. Then, we cleared our patio and prepared for possible evacuation for a 5 day period, keeping in mind that we might be stuck on a highway for hours or days and that we might never see our belongings in the house again. I combined it with the idea of a car camping trip and even prepared a traveling toilet system. We heard from our daughter-in-law Stacey that she had never experienced a hurricane and that our granddaughter Sarah wanted us to be there. Stacey and our grandson Billy got sandbags and a portable generator.

On Wednesday morning, Stacey picked us up at 7am and brought us and our evacuation luggage to her house in Oviedo. At her home, we experienced the rain and wind and a few brief power glitches at the height of the storm. Meanwhile, back at our house, the retention pond in our backyard almost reached our house, but the northeast wind kept the water away. Our house had a few hours of power outage on Thursday. Sanford was badly flooded and Oveido was slightly less flooded, but we stayed dry in Stacey's house. We stayed Wednesday and Thursday nights. Stacey drove us home on Friday, where we discovered that our house was dry and undamaged. The flooding of the St. John's River, Lake Jessup, and Lake Monroe continued for several days.

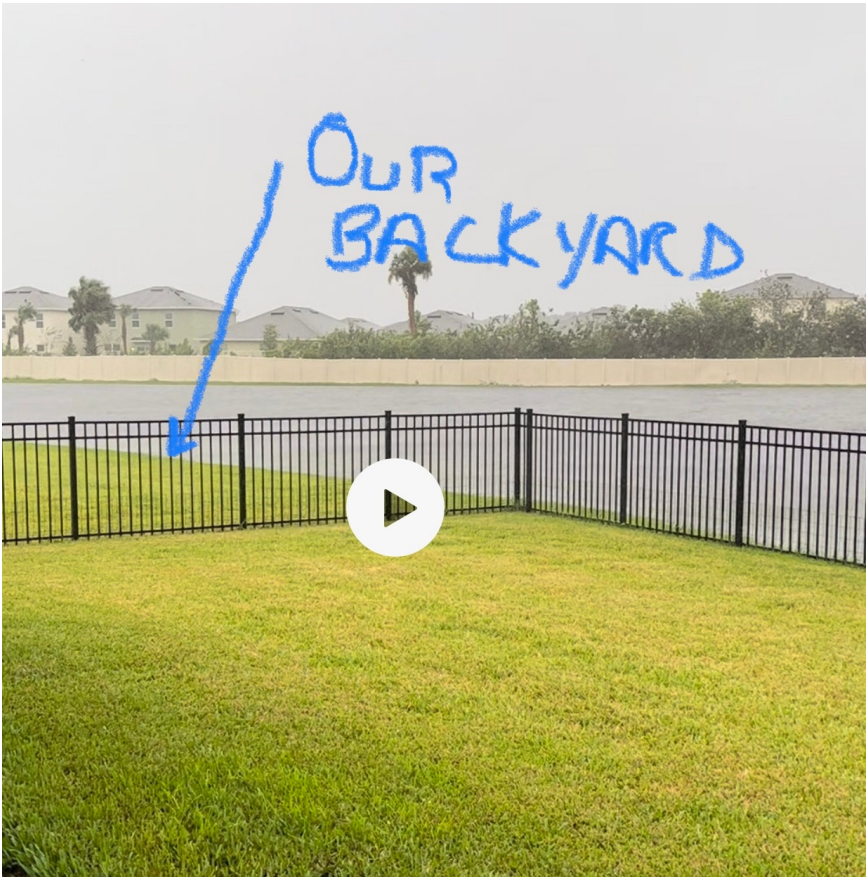
We learned a lot of lessons for next time:

## Stories from Wild Bill

1. Get a supply of empty sandbags and a supply of sand from Home Depot.
2. Charge battery blocks for power outages.
3. Organize batteries, lights, and emergency radio.
4. Get a couple of cases of water and Lara Bars.
5. Get plastic silverware, paper plates, paper towels, and wipes.
6. Make ice blocks in the freezer.
7. Have helmets available for tornados and other heavy weather.
8. Pack a “go bag” with cash, and important documents, including insurance information.
9. Gas up and turn the car into an evacuation vehicle, including emergency toilet.

Riding out the storm with Stacey, Sarah, Billy, and the dogs worked out well due to their warm hosting. It was a good idea to be in a two story house since most of the deaths from Ian in Florida were caused by drowning. We need to consider a triggering circumstance that would cause us to evacuate during future storms.

## Stories from Wild Bill



High water in our retention pond. Photo from a video taken by our neighbor Barbara.



## Stories from Wild Bill



Cathy and I viewing the storm with the dogs on Stacey's porch.

## Stories from Wild Bill



Our retention pond a couple of days after Ian went by.

