

Procrastination thy name is mine --but how does one condense fifty-five years onto one page? Being a chemist and spending my first two years on the job condensing research on a scientific topic for the 'man' in the lab, it is easy to do, but not very interesting.

Immediately upon graduation, San Francisco was my destination for a position with Shell Development Company as a literature chemist. The job was meant to further my education, but reading and proofreading all day led to head bobbing by three every day. Thankfully, I did not leave by heart in San Francisco, I found my heart there when I met my husband through one of these researches. John was returning to his home state of Minnesota to pursue his PhD in Chemical Engineering, so we both quit our jobs at Shell, got married in June of 1963, after only knowing each other six months and camped throughout the United States for two months. Both of us returned to school to pursue further degrees. My degree was in education and I did teach for one year. But teaching had to wait many years, when family life in the form of three boys in one year intervened. Yes, I had twins, Jeff and Todd, followed by Mark exactly a year later. Three lively boys, who became a veterinarian, a geologist and an electrical engineer, in that order. Three were in school and in college and graduate school all at the same time. Seeing what my granddaughter Megan's tuition costs at a private school are today, I thank my lucky stars I don't have to do that today!

Grandchildren - all grandmother's can talk for hours about that. I have two talented and lovely granddaughters, both miracle babies like my own children and therefore, all the more precious. Megan, Todd and Sara's daughter, is not only an excellent student but a talented musician. Like her Mother, she plays several instruments and her accomplishment on the oboe has led to a music scholarship in addition to her academic one. She will be attending Luther College in Iowa in the Fall. Kaitlyn, Mark and Traci's daughter, is also academically accomplished and attends a special high school for artistically talented students who pursue art classes in the morning and a regular course load in the afternoon.

My life changed dramatically in 2008 when my husband passed away quite unexpectedly. We went to dinner for his birthday and the next week he was gone. A form of cancer took him that quickly. John and I not only loved each other, we respected and liked each other. We did everything together. The following year, Jeff passed away, again quite unexpectedly. Of my children, we were the most alike in that we each had a great love and respect for nature. He taught me about birds and I taught him about wildflowers. Each passing was sad, but blessed in that neither suffered.

My love of nature has sustained and broadened my horizons in the ensuing years. I became a Master Gardener and a Master Naturalist. I teach classes every week, except in Winter, through out the year. My learning about nature and gardening has risen dramatically as I teach. My favorite topics are wildflowers, herbs and natural fairy gardens. My knowledge and passion is put to use on the fifteen acres where my husband built a beautiful home in the country for our retirement. Spring is in full bloom at the time of this writing - 6,000 daffodils, twenty crabapple, pear and weeping cherry trees and myriads of wildflowers are in bloom! Nature is in her glory. Who could ask for anything more!