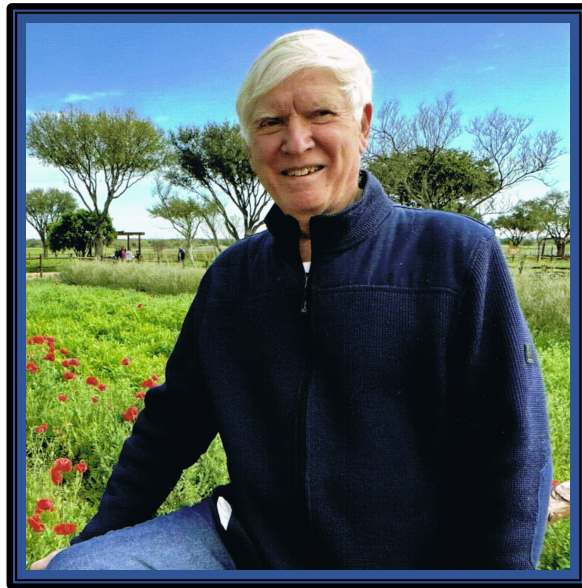


Carl Joseph Schulz

Legacy Letter
Life Story & Reflections

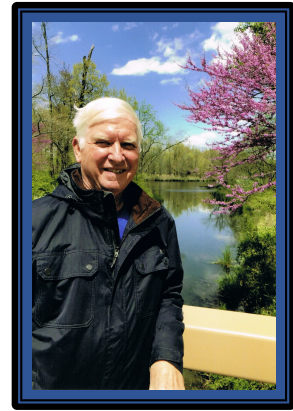


Carl Joseph Schulz

Legacy Letter

Life Story & Reflections

Compiled Between January & June, 2026



Interviewer's Note

When I got assigned to help Carl with his legacy letter, I had no idea that he was going to be way ahead of me! The first time I went to visit him and his wife, Joyce, he handed me a 28-page handwritten autobiography, making my job that much easier. As we sat and talked about the project, he admitted that when he had finished writing the 28 pages, Joyce felt like the last 25 years, which, of course, had been with her, hadn't quite received as much attention as the earlier stages of his lifetime. They then told me that Joyce had since written a "supplemental" chapter, if you will, providing many more interesting details to add to Carl's story. After transcribing both Carl and Joyce's writings, I noticed that while both writers had done a great job of recording the "facts," what was missing was some of the best perspectives of a lifetime—the philosophy factor. Consequently, I sat down with Carl for a one-on-one interview where he shared loads of wonderful thoughts which have subsequently been incorporated into his story as he relates it here. I found Carl to be a delightful individual with a real zest for living. It was a pleasure to get to know him and help put together this chronicle of his remarkable 82 years thus far.

-Vicky Meehan, Hospice Volunteer for Unity Hospice, Saint Louis, Missouri

Ancestry

Both of my grandfathers immigrated to America from Europe. Grandpa Schulz from Germany, (although the area that he came from is considered Poland now). I never got to meet him because he died before I was born. There are many, many Schulz's with several variations on spelling, too. The meaning of the name Schulz has to do with a sheriff or landowner—an overseer, someone sort of in control. My maternal grandfather came from Hungary at age 17. Both of them met and married their American-born wives in Wisconsin.

My mother's father was a bit of an entrepreneur in his own right. He had worked in agriculture, but after he married, he and my grandmother opened a bar/restaurant in Milwaukee. He made it quite successful and did well in life. But he was not ruthless in any sense. He was a very loving person.

Childhood Years

My father met my mother while she was working as a waitress in her parents' restaurant, and he would go there for lunch. At that time, he bought and sold livestock for a big company. They were married in Milwaukee, Wisconsin at St. John's Lutheran Church on June 12, 1943. I came along just a little over nine months later on March 28, 1944. The Lutheran church was to be an important pillar in my life—both in my education and in my faith.



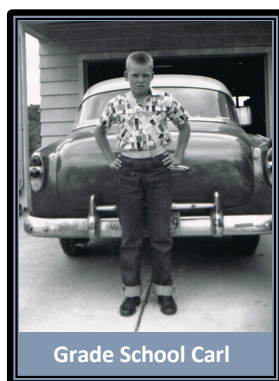
With funding from my grandparents, Mom and Dad started a neighborhood grocery store. I had a white cocker spaniel dog named “Corky.” Dad had a Willys Grey Coupe car and held a job with the Equity Livestock Association in Milwaukee.

During my toddler years, my mother was diagnosed with tuberculosis and had to spend three years in a rest home. My maternal grandparents and aunt looked after me while she was sick and took VERY good care of me. I have a vivid memory of Grandma kneeling next to the bed every night to say her nighttime prayers, in spite of her arthritic rheumatism. It made a strong impression on me about faith and God.

From 1947-1949, I went to kindergarten. My aunt would help me get ready and walk me to school. Then she would pick me up after school at noon on the corner of a busy intersection about five blocks from where the school was located. One morning, I was late for school. I remember standing at the school door, but I just couldn’t go in as I knew my classmates would make fun of me—which they did to any kid who was late. So instead of going in, I just turned around and walked to the corner where my aunt would meet me at noon. I just stood there and waited all morning. To this day, I hate being late for anything. It shows disrespect. I always try very hard to be on time.

In the springtime of 1949, I got scarlet fever and was quarantined, so I didn’t finish kindergarten. That May, we moved to Reedsburg, Wisconsin (population 3600), where my parents bought a two-bedroom home that became our family residence for nearly 75 years. Of course, many modifications were made to the home during that time frame, including adding a whole second story and staircase.

In the fall of 1949, I started in a small parochial Lutheran school where I spent the most wonderful years of my life in first through eighth grade. My teachers were the best! And lifelong friendships were formed with my classmates since pretty much all of us were together for the entire eight years. Now at age 82, I recently reached out by mail to the thirteen of them who are still alive.



In 1951, I got a baby sister. I wanted to name her Carolyn (two girls in my grade school class had that name), but my parents vetoed my suggestion and chose Marcia for her name.

One of my fondest memories is of our school’s annual Christmas Eve performances. All the students participated and had to wear heavily starched white capes. We would march down the aisle singing “*Oh Come All Ye Faithful*.” Memories are made of that stuff! A couple of those years, we’d exit the church when it was over to a wonderful snowfall. It was like a set from the great movie “*White Christmas*.” Never to be forgotten! Dad would

take us all for a ride through Reedsburg to view the beautiful house decorations, which he would have some up at our house, too. Later, at home, we would enjoy Mom’s table of pickled herring with Grandpa’s homemade Hungarian bratwurst and mild-paprika blood sausages. He raised pigs just to make his sausage. I loved it since I’d been eating it for as long as I could remember. Grandpa gave me the nickname “Butch,” which stuck with everyone in the family, and some of my cousins still call me that.

In 1958, I started high school in a secular school, where I did well academically, but never connected socially with the other students, although I did participate in sports—four years of baseball, plus a year of volleyball and wrestling.

I spent all my free time radio announcing at a local station near our home—WRDB. I was there every weekday night from 6:30 to 10:15 PM and on Saturdays from 1:00 to 10:15 PM. On Sundays, sometimes I would be there all day. I played “The Lutheran Hour” at 6:00 AM. All that responsibility kept me busy. I did homework while the records were playing. I was able to select from a wall full of 33 RPM records. My fellow students didn’t listen to me, as far as I know, because I mostly played old standards like Ray Conniff, Mitch Miller, Henry Mancini, Glen Miller, etc. from 8 to 9 PM, calling my program “*Night Notes*.” From 9 to 10 PM I played sleepy-time, soft music along with my theme song, “*Harbor Lights*.”

On To The Navy

My college education started at Sauk County Teachers College which was very close to home. This only lasted a year because I got an NROTC scholarship to the University of Wisconsin in Madison for the next fall. Wow! Did that ever open the world up to me! Many Navy trips during my first year, plus 125 classmates. I joined the Color Guard and marched with a flag at every home Badger football game at Camp Randall Stadium. Kept my church connection strong through Calvary Lutheran Campus Ministry. During my college years, I met and dated a few lovely ladies, none of which turned into anything serious. I was simply having so much fun!

In 1964, I was assigned my first Navy cruise out of San Diego. One of my NROTC buddies was given a San Francisco embarkation, so I drove the two of us from Wisconsin to California, taking the “scenic” route by going north to intersect the Trans-Canada Highway! We crossed Canada to Vancouver, British Columbia and dropped south through Seattle to San Francisco. It was an awesome trip! I dropped him off only to discover he had flunked out of the University of Wisconsin and had to find some way to get back home. I continued on to San Diego, where I spent eight weeks on the destroyer DD945 USS Hull.

One weekend when our ship was in port, I went to the beach to watch girls. I leaned against a beach wall next to another guy doing the same evaluating. I asked where he was from, and he said Wisconsin! We were both NROTC mid-shipmen but didn’t know each other because we were in different sections of our class at school. I asked if he had a way home when our assignment was up. “No.” I asked if he would like to ride with me in my white Corvair. “Love to!” he replied, and a fast friendship was formed.

In August, 1964 we headed out for Wisconsin. First stop was Mammoth Lakes campground. We took a swim in the lake and later met two wonderful sisters and their parents. Spent a pleasant 24 hours with them; and when we said our goodbyes the next day, we traded addresses to write. Over the next months, I corresponded with one of the sisters. I liked what she said. We “hit it off.”

1965 was my sophomore school year at UW. I earned my Army Paratrooper wings the summer before at Fort Benning, Georgia . . . almost killed myself when the wind blew me into a 250 foot tower, collapsing my chute. God guided my boots to a tower crossbar as my chute collapsed. There's no other way I can explain it. I hung onto a vertical support while ground crews came for me. Probably as close to a near-death experience as I ever had, but at 21 years of age, the incident didn't even rattle me. When you are that age you are invincible. On the fifth/final jump, I hit my head on the landing so hard they took me to the hospital. From my hospital bed the next morning, I wrote to my mom that I had not done it, thinking my last jump wouldn't count. Much to my surprise, they came to the hospital and pinned my wings right onto my pajamas! I had earned them the hard way!

After three and a half weeks of Marine training in North Carolina, I drove to the Naval Air Station in Corpus Christi, Texas for three and a half weeks' flight training with the rest of my NROTC class. Once that was over, my new Wisconsin friend I'd made in San Diego and I took my white Corvair on a road trip through Mexico City, Mazatlán and up the west coast of Mexico to San Diego where we met up with the sisters we'd met in Mammoth Lakes—one of with whom I'd been corresponding. I had a great time with my pen pal, and our "relationship" grew.

Family Life Begins

In 1966, I got introduced to the girl who would become my first wife, but I was still very much interested in my San Diego "girlfriend" and wanted to spend any time I could with her that summer. She traveled to Monterrey/Carmel to meet me while my ship was anchored in the bay. We had quite an adventure renting a motor scooter. She rode behind me. While climbing a hill downtown in Carmel, the front of the machine reared up, and we were "bucked off." My girlfriend was on her back with me on top of her holding the scooter above us both. Cars whizzed by as we untangled our problem. No injuries, just bruised egos. But we were making memories never to be forgotten. At the end of the day, I retired to the ship after I dropped her at a beautiful hillside hotel. Weeks later, I visited her again at her home in San Diego. We cemented our relationship that summer; and at Christmas, she came to Wisconsin, spending two weeks with me in Reedsburg. We had a fairy tale holiday, capped with Christmas Eve together with my family at St. Peter's. Little did I know when I put her on the airplane to fly home I would not see her again for three years, and by then we would both be married to other people!

Long distance relationships are hard, and the woman who became my first wife crept into my life in early 1967. I married her on August 19, 1967, based mostly on her roots in Milwaukee where the majority of my relatives lived. My San Diego love "got aced" over geography. Looking back, I can clearly see she would have been my best choice since the wife I took was extremely reluctant to have children.

I had to fight hard to get my wife to conceive our only child, a daughter. It's the reason I left the marriage in 1980. I really wanted a brother or sister for my daughter. Fortunately, she says she likes being an only child. I'm glad she's okay with it. I never will be.

In 1970, when I got sent to San Diego for some Navy training, I was able to have lunch with my former, now-married San Diego girlfriend and her only daughter at the Hotel Del Coronado. It was such a treat! After that, I never saw or talked with her again until 2026. 56 years! I still look at her as the woman I should have married in 1967, but I believe we needed to go our separate ways so that both of our daughters could be born. I'm grateful that my current wife, to whom I've been with for over 25 years, is not threatened by my desire to now keep in touch with this dear friend who was such an important person to me in my youth.

My Navy career, which spanned 21 years, took me all over the world. I experienced places I never would have such as Hawaii, Japan, many Pacific islands (including the Philippines), Vietnam, Hong Kong, Alaska, Spain, and Morocco, just to name some of the highlights. The Vietnam war is something I will always be proud of serving. Flying P3's while tracking Russian submarines couldn't have been more essential, and I know I was doing the very best for our country.

One of my proudest naval accomplishments was being chosen out of 92 applicants as one of two personnel selected for a branch called Training & Administration of Reserves (TAR). This took me back to California, where I bought a house in Sunnyvale. My daughter was born there on August 17, 1975. I still own the house we lived in there. In 1977, I got orders which brought me back to the Midwest to the Naval Air Station in Glenview, Illinois. After splitting with my wife in 1980, my daughter remained in Illinois with her. I ended up returning to California where I finished out my Navy career.

A New Chapter

After retirement from the Navy in 1989, I moved to Lake Zurich, Illinois to be close to my daughter. I got a job teaching fifth grade at a St. Peter's Lutheran school and then was hired by the AID Association for Lutherans. This is where I met my current wife, Joyce, in 1998. She needed mutual funds, and I was her salesman. We laughed together over my new computer program and her "risk tolerance." At our second meeting, I brought her flowers. But that was that. No romance (yet!).



Post Navy Carl

I got to spend the turn of the millennium in California with my mother, my sister and my daughter. We toasted the arrival of a new century with champagne on Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena. The Badgers (my Wisconsin University alma mater team) were playing in the Rose Bowl that year, and we got to attend the game. What a way to bring in the 21st century!

Joyce and I had crossed paths again because we were both members of an ELCA church in Arlington Heights—*Our Savior*. They had a singles group called Icebreakers for older singles. We started dating in January, 2000. Our first date, we went to see a great movie called *Cider House Rules* and then went for pizza. Soon after, she invited me to see a play at the high school where she worked. And she made me dinner. After a couple more Icebreakers events, we were officially a couple.

We had five years of sharing fun events and sorting out our differences before we married. Our first trip was over spring break that year—to California, the first of many, many trips to the west coast over the years to follow. The Marine Memorial Club in San Francisco became one of our favorite places to stay. Getting to know each other's families meant numerous trips to Wisconsin, Colorado, Missouri, and even Budapest where we visited some of my cousins. Continued travels gave us the opportunity to explore Europe—London, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Prague and Istanbul. An Amtrak adventure took us to Seattle, Vancouver and Portland.

Even though we were together, we also took some solo trips as well. One of my most memorable was a 2002 cruise to Antarctica. I went swimming with icebergs floating past! The shore-line waters out to approximately 20 feet were warmed by volcano action, just enough to allow us to swim with only our regular swimsuits. An amazing experience! Earlier on the trip we saw lots of Buenos Aires tango dancing and got smashed drinking Malbec on a Uruguay Gaucho Ranch. We went ashore four times to visit penguin rookeries. Careful, don't get behind them as they fire projectile poop! Even though the Drake passage was very rough, it was worth it.

I decided to get my cruise director's license, necessitating some cruises in the Caribbean toward that regard.

Joyce took a solo trip to Sedona and learned Qigong.

We began to talk of pooling our resources and retiring together, but we could never agree on a place. Then, for Joyce's 60th birthday, we went to southern Illinois and stayed in a B & B near the wine trails. The host couple were retired military from the east coast and spent a fair amount of time with us talking up southern Illinois. I came to the realization, "I could live here."

So it began. Joyce started checking out properties and found an unfinished house just outside of Carbondale. We placed a bid—175k for an unfinished house! Our bid was rejected and then a week later, accepted. Southern Illinois, here we come! We were both 60 years old.

At Christmas 2004, I asked Joyce to marry me. In January, I made it official with a diamond ring. She retired from the school district in June, sold her condo and said farewell to Chicago. We had been working on the Carbondale house. The amount of work was formidable, but it had become a labor of love, and we were sleeping in the house with only one outlet for the coffeepot and our water supply in the bathtub! I soon added ten wooded acres to our property on our new home's east edge.

Our wedding on July 23, 2005 was a hot and steamy day (100°) at Mount Pleasant Winery of Missouri. Officiating was a pastor who was one of Joyce's personal friends. Many of our close friends were there, as well as lots of family.

Joyce's three daughters have been a wonderful addition to my life, and I love them as if they were my own. Albeit later in life, my daughter finally got the siblings I had wanted for her.

My daughter got married the year after us on Joyce's birthday—September 23, 2006. I took lots of pictures, but then somehow managed to accidentally delete them! No wedding photos, but we sure have beautiful memories of the event.

The Next 20 Years

For the past twenty years, we've worked on finishing the house and traveled a lot. Much of the work on the house was done by me personally. It was no small task! Some friends who had done a similar house project said it would take us five years to finish the house. Because we traveled at least half of every year, it ended up taking us ten years. There are still some parts that are unfinished, but those spaces don't bother us. We are grateful for all the friends who helped with so many of the projects since we began. Joyce and I loved creating and designing the place to be exactly the way we wanted it! On the grounds, we began growing grapes to make wine. The large home was ideal for special Christmas holidays with the family, where we would grind pork with the kids to make Hungarian sausage just like my grandfather used to do. I would cut really tall thirteen-foot Christmas trees from our circle drive area.

We enjoy travelling and have taken many, many trips together and with extended family to California and Wisconsin. Colorado was often on the way to California. We took Route 50—the loneliest road in America—across Nevada. Everyone should drive across Utah at least once in their life. I love to drive. One of our trips took us east through New England and the maritime provinces of Canada—very new territory and different for us. On Battle Harbor Island, we walked around the island and found an old church with a pedal-operated organ. Joyce can play, so she looked at the hymnal on the book rest to find it open to the Navy hymn, *"Eternal Father, Strong To Save."* I want that to be sung at my funeral.

We took the train at times. The Empire Builder more than once to Seattle and Portland. The California Zephyr to San Francisco was fun; and when we got to San Francisco, we didn't have to worry about parking the car. The Marine Club always provided a great time whenever we were there. We navigated all the wonderful neighborhoods and sights via bus and commuter trains, cable car or often by walking! Chinatown, the Ferry Building, Fisherman's Wharf, Ghirardelli's Chocolatiers, Golden Gate Park and the Bridge. The Mission District.

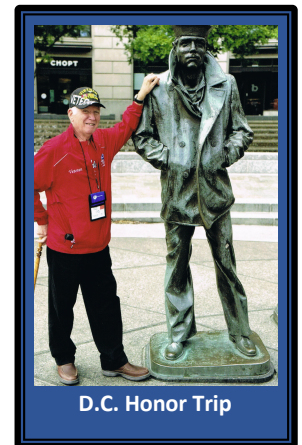
We went on a number of cruises. They were mostly in the Caribbean. I loved being on a ship, and Joyce also enjoyed the soft rocking motion of being on the sea. The island stops were fascinating, the nightly entertainment was usually good, the endless food was impressive—pizza and ice cream anytime you wanted some! We both enjoyed dressing up for photos on the formal night. But our best cruise was the one from London up the coast of Scotland and then on to Norway. Scotch from Edinburgh, fresh salmon, flying fish, the mysterious old church in Scotland from the *DaVinci Code*. The fjords of Norway. Stunning.

Can't talk about our travels without mentioning our trip around the world. Now THAT was quite the adventure. Route: St. Louis-LAX-Beijing; train across Mongolia where we watched and sampled milking mare horses. We then boarded the Trans-Siberian Railroad for several stops including a picnic and swim in Lake Baikal (largest volume fresh water lake in the world).

Our train continued all the way across the Urals where Joyce stood in Asia, and I stood in Europe—and we kissed across the continents! We saw the Kremlin, as well as Stalin’s and Khrushchev’s graves. Onward to St. Petersburg, then exit Russia to Helsinki, Finland . . . Freedom! Lastly, a long flight home to Chicago in the U.S.

A more recent life highlight occurred in 2023. It was a military Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.— totally no cost. We spent all day touring the various Memorials to servicemen. Fantastic! The best part was when we returned about 9 PM. There had to be 1,000+ people waiting. The local display of honor sent chills down my spine . . . still does.

Over the years, we’ve enjoyed not just one but two total solar eclipses (2018 & 2025), both 100% viewable from our back yard in Carbondale.



Health Takes A Turn

In 2020, we bought a house in University City (Saint Louis) in order to be closer to VA medical services. I had two hip replacements by crackerjack surgeons completing their Washington University Medical School training.

Buying the University City home turned out to be very good foresight, as 2025 brought the worst health year of my life! About November, 2024, the VA discovered I had prostate cancer with a PSA of 21. In January-February 2025, I had twenty-four radiation treatments, which brought my PSA down to 0.016. It was gone! Still is, but the radiation “toasted” my urinary tract and bladder. I had blood in my urine for three weeks. A scope cauterized the problem after a blood transfusion.

Next, on March 24, I had a heart attack in the wee small hours in bed Sunday morning. I had pressure in my left chest, and I was freezing cold. I crawled back into bed and told Joyce I wasn’t well. She immediately said, “I’m calling an ambulance.” She saved my life! The ambulance took me to Barnes Jewish Hospital (coincidentally, I was born in a Jewish hospital). There, one of the best cardio doctors put in two stents to bypass blockages to my heart. He put in two more a week later. What a guy!

So now I have ascites, a form of cancer that allows fluid to build up inside my abdominal wall. Where from, they don’t know. Not sure about the cancer either. What a year! Now they have me on hospice. I hate that. It’s for dying people, and I don’t think I’m there yet. God help me. I do, however, have faith that prayers are working.

Reflections

I spent my first five years in Milwaukee, then fifteen years in Reedsburg, ten years flying around the world, thirteen years in California, and returned to the Midwest in 1989. Ten years went by in northern Illinois watching my daughter complete her education and become a social worker.

I'm thinking now about our home in Carbondale. It's always been a part-time home. We were either travelling somewhere for half of the year, or now spending half our time in University City. But we've lived there for twenty-one years, and that's the longest time I've ever lived in one place!

As I look back over my life, one of the things that most inspired and amazed me was when we put a man on the moon. Rocketry and the whole space travel movement was of great interest to me, no doubt bolstered by my career as a Navy pilot. I actually got to meet astronaut James Lovell—he was one of my aunt's classmates. I remember when I started Navy flight training, one of the officers was standing in front of an auditorium full of trainees and asked, "How many of you would like to be an astronaut?" And believe it or not, no one (including me) raised their hand. But with my sense of adventure and all the travelling I've done over so many years, I think I would have welcomed the opportunity to experience space travel had it become available in my lifetime.

Some of my favorite movies—*An Affair to Remember* is one. *People Will Talk* is another one (probably much lesser known)—but Cary Grant was in both of those. If I could reincarnate, I would love to come back as him. He was always such a gentleman. As a Naval Officer, we were declared by an Act of Congress to be officers and gentlemen. Of course, *It's A Wonderful Life* can't be beat. And *South Pacific*. That was based on James Michener's book. He was a gifted author, and I loved reading his books because he always wrote about exotic places and travel. I was collecting his books for a while and managed to acquire 48 out of about 60 he wrote. One of the songs from the musical *South Pacific* was called "*Happy Talk*," and a line from that song says, "You've *got* to have a dream." That *always* resonated with me. That's what life is all about. I had a dream to fly airplanes, and I fulfilled that dream!

Also, I dreamed of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, and at the age of 65, I did! After reading the book *Dr. Schweitzer of Lambarene* at age 10, I became captivated by Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa. In 2009, I joined a group of ten people on a tour engineered by the University of Wisconsin Travel Agency. It took seven days, with an all-night scramble over the rocks using headlamps and starting at midnight in order to reach the crater for the gorgeous, extraordinary view of sunrise which is etched in my brain. Carrying on afterwards another couple of miles, we reached the summit on January 24, 2009. Getting down the mountain took two full days. Ski poles in hands, we slid/"skied" through scree (loose gravel)—unstoppable for long stretches. We jammed into the front of our climbing boots so hard I lost two toenails! We were all so tired at the halfway overnight, everyone fell asleep in their tents without bothering for supper. It was an experience of a lifetime.

When I think about philosophies, I think in terms of the idea of motivational things to tell others, perhaps to help them benefit and move forward with their lives.

I'm a religious person—Christian—but not overbearing about it. Throughout my lifetime, I've seen so many different variations, not only of Christianity, but all other religions as well. For example, the other day I was chatting with one of the hospice volunteers, a young university student, and when I asked him if he was a Christian, he responded that he prays to a number of Gods. And I said, "Well, more power to you." I believe it's up to each of us to find what we believe.

When you think about it, Christians have one God, but at the same time, it breaks down into three aspects of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. When my mother was in her last years, she adopted a phraseology that was very inspiring to me. She would say, “God is always with us.” I fully respect her saying that so frequently and appreciate her faith, but I thought to myself, “You know, I want a saying of my own.” And so my own expression I've adopted, and *I really mean this*, is—“Say your prayers.” Just *say your prayers*. My reasoning is that I want to cut through all the mishmash. When you say your prayers, you are talking directly to God. That's a one-on-one. And it doesn't matter what you believe, you are going straight to the Source. And to me, that's what's really most important in life.

The best advice I've ever been given has usually originated from the Bible:

- Trust in the Lord and all things shall pass.
- With God there's nothing you have to fear.

But sometimes the advice doesn't have to be so deep. My wife, Joyce, says:

- Always take the scenic route!
- Stop at thrift stores and garage sales.
- Eat at local restaurants with lots of older cars in the parking lot.
- Visit lots of churches, parks and libraries.

One of the most important aspects of getting older, and I can say this as I'm in my 80's, is that you gain so much wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to sort it out so you can impart the good stuff and throw the rest in the garbage can where it belongs. Life lessons—you've been there, done that, and you get to share the good pieces with folks coming up after you. You've learned to filter what's smart and what's foolish, and if you can help someone not make the same mistakes as you, excellent! You share the wisdom with everybody that you possibly can because you're not going to be here forever.

There's a quote engraved on a plaque displayed on the side of the main administration building at the University of Wisconsin.

“Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere, we believe that the great State University of Wisconsin should ever encourage that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found.

(Taken from a report of the Board of Regents in 1894)”

As used here, “sifting and winnowing” is a metaphor for the academic pursuit of truth. Sifting and winnowing refers to separating the kernels of grain from the chaff and is referred to biblically in Matthew 3:12. If you think about it, it's what a life well-lived is truly about—always trying to find the truth—keeping the positive and turning away from the negative. I've learned to mentally embrace people, and I love to give hugs. No such thing as too many hugs! Hugs are VERY positive.

I was extremely fortunate in regard to my family of origin. Countless positive experiences with parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles--soooo many cousins—every one of my relatives were really, really nice people. God blessed me with all those good folks in my life. Close family ties. I hope my own family life has been a solid reflection of those same values.

My daughter is undoubtedly the thing in life that I'm most proud of. She's an outstanding human being and an amazing mother. My three bonus daughters actually started calling me Dad, which makes me feel wonderful. Our six grandchildren are spectacular kids who have each found their niche and seem to be succeeding. I can't possibly ask for more in terms of my family ties. Blessed indeed. Life is all about connection with each other. And I've been able over my lifetime to have not only close family connections but long-time friendship connections from school, church and the Navy to name just some. These relationships are cherished—each and every one of them. And I'm eternally grateful, which, incidentally is the very best way to live your life!



Carl & Joyce Schulz – Living Their Best Life!