

News and Views *Avila*

A publication of the Resident Council at Avila Retirement Community

Albany, NY

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During the past few months Avila has added two new members to its growing list of centenarians. Congratulations to Al Staff and Molly Larner. (Photographs by Max Tiller)



CENTENARIANS

By Wilbur Shapiro

*Persons of 100 years are called Centenarians
To live that long they cannot be contrarian
They have witnessed a century of history
From good things to bad things, like bigotry*

*They are wise beyond their years
They should be consulted with our fears
They have lived through the evils of depression
They are very strong and survive without concession*

*To those that live so long, God sends a message
Teach the others, "try to be above average"
Although they are scarce, at Avila, we have a few
We wish them well as they embark on century two*



CHLOE AND ROD CORRELL**Interviewed by Murray Block**

PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX TILLER

Rod and Chloe Correll are our very friendly and affable new neighbors in Apartment 148L in the Lodge. They were born just one month apart, in different parts of New York City, Rod in Manhattan and Chloe in Queens. They grew up near each other on the north shore of Long Island, Chloe in Manhasset, and Rod in Great Neck. They were destined to meet and, thanks to Rod's best friend, they did, on a blind date in 1951 when both were sophomores, Chloe at Manhasset High and Rod at Lawrenceville. They dated off and on during their high school and college years, Rod at Yale, Chloe at Goucher, and finally tied the knot in 1957, a strong bond that has lasted 62+ years.

Directly after graduating from Yale in 1957, Rod joined his father at Hermann Loewenstein, Inc., the leather tanning and merchandising firm founded in NYC by his grandfather in 1893. When its fortunes started to deteriorate in the mid-60s, Rod moved its headquarters and his family to upstate New York. The move proved fruitful; the reorganized company and his growing family started to flourish. Besides her primary roles as mother and homemaker, Chloe's talents as an artist played an important part in the couple's lives. The paintings on the walls of their apartment here at Avila attest to her skills. Less obvious is the importance of the part she played as the firm's fashion director during the nine year stint following its departure from NYC. Her eye for color and her warmth as a presenter of its leathers were major factors in the firm's resurgence. Equally important was the part she played later as office manager of the Family Firm Institute, a networking organization for family business consultants that Rod helped found and led after he graduated with an MBA from the Yale School of Management in 1985.

The couple has three children, one of whom, Douglas, died unexpectedly in 2016. Their oldest, Catherine, is a nurse/midwife and works locally at St. Peters Hospital. Her husband Frank Yunker is a professor at Fulton-Montgomery Community College. They live in nearby Niskayuna and have three daughters, Alex (25), Rebecca (23) and Emily (19). Their other son, Edward, lives in Long Beach on the south shore of Long Island. Edward is working as a school psychologist and his wife Monica is a grade school teacher. They have two teenage sons, Thomas and Daniel.

Chloe's current interests are playing bridge, doing crossword puzzles and reading. She keeps herself fit here doing water aerobics. Rod's exercise routine includes stints in the Lodge's fitness room on the stationary bike and doing stretching, strengthening and balancing exercises. He is an avid Scrabble player, aspiring writer and, together with Chloe, enjoys playing bridge, doing crossword puzzles, attending opera, symphony and ballet performances.

After 42 years in their large Victorian home in Johnstown, Rod and Chloe decided it was time to move on. In 2013, after visiting a friend who lives in a retirement community near Buffalo, they decided this sort of life might suit them. A six year search began, culminating in the selection of Avila in the early months of 2019.

Their decision to come here was affected by several factors. First was their desire to locate near one of their children. Second was the attractiveness of the Avila campus and the apartments being offered to them. Third was recommendations given by friends. And finally, there was the warmth and compassionate nature of Geri Curtin, the first of many Avila staff members and residents who have welcomed them prior to and since they moved here. That's not surprising; they are a welcome addition to our warm and friendly community.

JOANN AND TONY CRINIERI

Interviewed by Wilbur Shapiro

Tony and JoAnn grew up in Newburgh, NY. Tony is a graduate of Albany State Teachers College (SUNY), earning a bachelor's and a master's in business education. JoAnn is a graduate of the College of New Rochelle and majored in education. They married in 1964. Tony taught at Corning Community College until an opportunity arose in West Virginia. Parkersburg Community College—later to become part of West Virginia University—wanted to set up a program in secretarial science. Tony accepted the position, and courses were established in typing, business math, accounting, etc.

While in West Virginia, JoAnn obtained a master's degree from West Virginia University. She taught English, religion, and Latin at Parkersburg Catholic High School and also served as junior high guidance counselor. Tony taught at West Virginia University-Parkersburg and also served as Business Department chairman, before retiring as professor emeritus.

After some 47 years in Vienna, West Virginia, the Crinieris packed up and entered Avila in September 2019. They came here to be closer to their two children. Cathleen is assistant director of the intensive English language program at UAlbany. Michael is a managing director at Goldman Sachs in New York City.

After graduating from Albany State, Tony served in the Army and was stationed at West Point. The Crinieri family loves traveling in Canada and the United States. They have spent many summers in Maine and in the Adirondacks. In addition, JoAnn has traveled to Ireland, France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Japan, and Hong Kong.

The Crinieris were very active in their community, including volunteering at a weekly soup kitchen and at St. Michael's Parish. They both love reading, and JoAnn enjoys water exercise in the Avila pool.

The Crinieris are enjoying their lives at Avila, and Avila is very happy that they returned to their roots and are making significant contributions to the Avila community.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX TILLER

BETSY MCCARTHY**By Karl Gohlke**

PHOTOGRAPH BY KARL GOHLKE

An Albany native, Betsy McCarthy has enjoyed a life full of family and friends, all of whom continue to reside in the Capital District. Many of her friends have moved into Avila and have made her assimilation very easy.

Betsy was raised on Holland Avenue and moved to a South Main Street residence upon her marriage to the love of her life, Justin McCarthy. She related that he had become the object of her romantic life when she was only 15 and continued to his sudden and untimely death at age 50. A widow with five children, she was able to continue to manage her family with the support of her friends and faith.

Her family had established deep roots in the greater Albany community. Her 5 children and 15 grandchildren attended parochial schools and colleges

and have been involved in business and government enterprises. Of some note, only five of her children and grandchildren are females. Males have dominated the family tree.

Avila was not her first down-sized location. She had moved into another congregate community where most of the residents were not retired but were out of the community most of the day. She was looking for a more communal residence and she says she has found it at Avila. Early success in the very competitive bingo arena and the reconnection with many of her old friends has convinced her that she is in the right place.

BARBARA MULLER**By Maxine Koblenz**

One of the special things about the Avila News and Views interviews are the great new people you get to meet, learn about and welcome into the Avila community.

Barbara or "Basha" (which means Barbara in Polish) is her nickname with family and friends. She was married for 56 years to her husband, an engineer with the telephone company. She lived on Long Island for 14 years then moved to Guilderland for over 30 years. Barbara has two sons and six beautiful, successful college-educated grandchildren.

She graduated from college 20 years after high school to become a physical therapy assistant for 22 years in the Albany-Schenectady-Schoharie BOCES school districts working with physically and mentally challenged students.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX TILLER

She loves reading and is a history buff stemming in part from her interest in the Civil War and WWII.

Barbara enjoyed travel; liked Ireland and Austria best. She is also a proficient "distance cyclist," biking as much as fifty 100 mile trips in New York, Rhode Island, Virginia, and South Carolina, as well as many other locations. She hopes to return to biking in the spring.

She was introduced to Avila through her daughter-in-law's mother who was a resident here. Barbara describes Avila as friendly and "homey" and she can easily share experiences and interests with other residents. She has found many age appropriate activities, good physical fitness opportunities and a great location; easy for her Ballston Lake son to drive to and her Guilderland neighbors to visit.

The challenging first few months of residency were eased by having her best friend, Bella Rose, her Lhasa Apso with her. Bella made Barbara's difficult transition to Avila doable because of all the people who responded positively to her pet. Barbara is grateful to Avila staff who installed a sidewalk outside her east rear door making life so much easier for her and Bella Rose to exit.

Her bucket list includes cycling around Cape Cod, a walk around Central Park and walking across the Brooklyn Bridge. May all this come to fruition as we give a warm welcome to "Basha."

MILLIE POLSIK

By Erin Teichman



PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX TILLER

Millie was born in Yonkers, NY, the youngest of 12. She has one sister remaining. She met her husband, Louis, at her sister's wedding. They married in 1951. Millie worked for various businesses as a secretary while Louis became a linotypist for a Hastings-on-Hudson newspaper.

She has two children, Gary, who lives in Saratoga Springs, and Laura in Guilderland. Laura and her husband Joseph are the parents of four sons, two of whom still live in the area. She also has three great-grandchildren, Katy Lou, Toby, and Hudson.

In 1958 the family moved to Schenectady for Louis's job on the Schenectady Gazette where he remained for 24 years. After retiring from her job in the bursar's office of SUNY Albany, Millie and Louis travelled. They visited 26 countries over the years. Millie's favorites were Egypt and Switzerland.

Millie was widowed in 2018; continued to live in their Rotterdam condo until her children encouraged her to move "somewhere safe," so she chose Avila which is close to Laura's home. Thus far Millie is enjoying settling into her apartment and meeting her neighbors. Welcome to Avila, Millie!

STEVE RINGS**By John Wagner**

Steve Rings, a recent resident of the Lodge, has rather deep Albany roots. His grandfather bought property in Guilderland, just beyond the Albany city limits. His parents built their house there when Steve's mother inherited the land on Church Road. Steve and his two siblings grew up there.

Steve went to Guilderland High School and then to Alfred University in western New York State where he majored in history. Interested in teaching history, he went to the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, seeking a master's degree. When Steve recognized the scarcity of positions for high school history teachers, he returned to Albany and enrolled in Albany Law School. With his law degree, Steve joined the New York State's Department of Insurance. For over 20 years, he was involved in the review of insurance policies to verify their compliance with state regulations



PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX TILLER

Steve has travelled in the United States and Europe. One of his more memorable was a trip to the Netherlands. He was there for that country's tulip festival. As an Albanian, he was quite proud of his city's tulip festival, but was awe-struck by the beauty and size of the Dutch version.

Another of his pleasures is cigar smoking. Now, he must enjoy them in the Cigar Lounge at the Premium Cigar Shop on Central Avenue. In addition to the chance to enjoy his delightful cigars, the Lounge is also the site of a book club to which he belongs. Recently, the club was discussing *The Topeka Road* by Ben Lerner.

His other hobbies include collecting things. Steve has an extensive coin collection, most of which now resides in a safe deposit box. He also likes movies from the classics of the WWII era, with actors like Errol Flynn, John Wayne, and Clint Eastwood (in the "spaghetti westerns"). In the process of "down-sizing," Steve was forced to part with much of his library of books.

For many years, Steve lived with his parents to assist them when his father's firm closed its doors and then to help them as they aged. He is now very pleased to be here at the Lodge with its warm family environment.

SR. MARIE LOUISE WOLFINGTON**By Karl Gohkle****PHOTOGRAPH BY KARL GOHLKE**

Sister Marie Louise Wolfington returned to the Albany area following a long journey of service in the Society of the Sacred Heart. She had entered the Society at the Kenwood Convent following her graduation from Immaculata College. She was 21.

A native of Philadelphia, her life in service would take her to many locations in different states and different countries. She started out as an elementary school teacher in the Washington area and moved into administration as she progressed through a series of assignments in a wide range of locations ranging from Rhode Island and Massachusetts to Florida and Louisiana to a

northern section of India. An engaging individual, she was willing and able to take on new and difficult assignments with a variety of communities, often during challenging times. She took on an assignment post-Katrina to work in building housing for high school and college students displaced following the hurricane. She often was assigned to take charge when a new challenge presented.

Sister Marie Louise has become very interested in the environmental protection movement, the pollution prevention efforts, particularly the reduction in the use of plastics which are not degradable. Her Society has committed itself to coastal restoration and healthy waters.

Sister M-L, as she prefers to be addressed, has joined some of her friends and colleagues whom she has known for years. She is integrating easily into the Avila community. She resides in the Lodge and may be reached at extension 791.

A GOD GARDEN**Submitted by Marion Kuritz (author unknown)**

In my god garden I would first plant four rows of peas; preparedness, promptness, preservation, and politeness.

Next to them I would plant three rows of squash; squash gossip, squash criticism, and squash indifference.

Then I would put in four rows of lettuce; lettuce be unselfish, lettuce be loyal, lettuce love one another, and lettuce be truthful.

No garden is complete without turnips, and mine would have turnip with a smile, turnip with a new idea, and turnip with real determination.

BY THE DEEP BLUE SEA

By Don Stauffer

When you walk down the hall from the mailroom of the Grand Lodge you will see to your right what appears to be an enchanted blue undersea grotto, but upon a second look it is a seaside scene, replete with waves, swimmers, and birds flying overhead. Also dotted here and there are fishnets, life preservers and other paraphernalia of the sea.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX TILLER



PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX TILLER

This is the work of Barbara Howansky, Fitness Director, which came about, she says, during a conversation with Alton Mendleson, when they agreed that the entrance was rather drab and could use some fixing up. So she and three of her staff, Jeanette, Nicola and Mary, set to work to paint it blue. Then Barbara, who has some experience as a sign painter, fashioned patterns for the waves, swimmers, etc. and hand painted them on the walls.

The result has been a welcome freshening up for this much-used passageway. Though one resident did not care for the shade of blue and another worried about having to take Dramamine, the response has been overwhelmingly positive. One resident says that on a day when he is feeling down in the dumps he just has to walk in there to feel his spirits lifting.

It's still a work in progress at this writing, Barbara says. Still to be added are pictures of all the staff members, and a motto over the exit: "Seas the day!"

ZOROASTER TO CYRUS THE GREAT IN 596 BC

- Youth is not a time of life . . . it is a state of mind.
- Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years – people grow old by deserting their ideals.
- Years wrinkle the skin but giving up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul!
- Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair – these are the long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust.

DEPRESSION IN OLDER PERSONS

Submitted by Jodi Mitchell-Rosa

The following article was taken from the NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Depression in Older Persons Fact Sheet.

According to NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Depression affects more than 6.5 million of the 35 million Americans aged 65 or older. Most people in this stage of life with depression have been experiencing episodes of the illness during much of their lives. Others may experience a first onset in late life—even in their 80s and 90s. Depression in older persons is closely associated with dependency and disability and causes great distress for the individual and the family. Why does depression in the older population often go untreated? Depression in elderly people often goes untreated because many people think that depression is a normal part of aging—a natural reaction to chronic illness, loss and social transition. Many elderly people and their families don't recognize the symptoms of depression, aren't aware that it is a medical illness and don't know how it is treated.

Others may mistake the symptoms of depression as signs of:

- dementia
- Alzheimer's disease
- arthritis
- cancer
- heart disease
- Parkinson's disease
- stroke
- thyroid disorders

Also, many older persons think that depression is a character flaw and are worried about being teased or humiliated. They may blame themselves for their illness and are too ashamed to get help. Others worry that treatment would be too costly. Yet research has also shown that treatment is effective and, in fact, changes the brain when it works.



What are the consequences of untreated depression in older persons? Late-life depression increases risk for medical illness and cognitive decline. Unrecognized and untreated depression has fatal consequences in terms of both suicide and nonsuicide mortality: older Caucasian males have the highest rate of suicide in the U.S. Depression is the single most significant risk factor for suicide in the elderly population. Tragically, many of those people who go on to die by suicide have reached out for help—20 percent see a doctor the day they die, 40 percent the week they die and 70 percent in the month they die. Yet depression is frequently missed. Elderly persons are more likely to seek treatment for other physical ailments than they are to seek treatment for depression.

For some older people, particularly those with lifelong histories of depression, the development of a disabling illness, loss of a spouse or a friend, retirement, moving out of the family home or some other stressful event may bring about the onset of a depressive episode. It should also be noted that depression can be a side effect of some medications commonly prescribed to older persons, such as medications to treat hypertension. Finally, depression in the elderly population can be complicated and compounded by dependence on substances such as alcohol, which acts as a depressant.

Are some older persons at higher risk for depression? Older women are at a greater risk: women in general are twice as likely as men to become seriously depressed. Biological factors, like hormonal changes, may make older women more vulnerable. The stresses of maintaining relationships or caring for an ill loved one and children also typically fall more heavily on women, which could contribute to higher rates of depression. Unmarried and widowed individuals as well as those who lack a supportive social network also have elevated rates of depression. Conditions such as heart attack, stroke, hip fracture or macular degeneration and procedures such as bypass surgery are known to be associated with the development of depression. In general, depression should be assessed as a possibility if recovery from medical procedure is delayed, treatments are refused or problems with discharge are encountered.

Can depression in older persons be treated? Fortunately, the treatment prognosis for depression is good. Once diagnosed, 80 percent of clinically depressed individuals can be effectively treated. Medications can be beneficial for elderly individuals in treating the symptoms of depression. Medications are frequently combined with supportive psychotherapy or cognitive behavioral therapy to improve their effectiveness. Research has shown that depressed individuals may need to try more than one medication to get an optimal response. Psychosocial treatment plays an essential role in the care of older patients who have significant life crises, lack social support or lack coping skills to deal with their life situations. Because large numbers of elderly people live alone, have inadequate support systems or do not have contact with a primary care physician, special efforts are needed to locate and identify these people to provide them with needed care. Natural supports like church or bridge group colleagues should be encouraged. There are services available to help older individuals, but the problem of clinical depression must be detected before treatment can begin. Like diabetes or arthritis, depression is a chronic disease. Getting well is only the beginning of the challenge—the goal is staying well. The treatment that gets someone well is the treatment that will keep that person well.

If a resident is concerned about feelings of depression, please seek out assistance from your medical doctor, or see the resident service advisor for a list of mental health resources.

ERA OF THE HUDSON RIVER STEAMBOATS - 1807 to 1948

By Steve Rotter

The era of the steamboat began in 1769 when a Scotsman named James Watt patented an improved version of the steam engine that spurred other inventors on to explore this technology. This opened the door to the golden age of steamboats.

In 1807, the first official trip of Robert Fulton's "Clermont" went from New York City to Albany, making history with a 150 mile trip in 28 hours and 45 minutes at an average speed of about five miles per hour. One stop was made at Clermont for wood fuel with an arrival in Albany to the great amazement and curiosity of the public. This was the inauguration of the first steamboat. The boat was a side paddle wheel boat with a wood fired steam engine. The next six years saw six steamers built for commercial travel on the Hudson River with five stops made from Newburgh to Albany. Fares ranged from \$3 to \$7. Time for the trips was 14 hours to Newburgh and 36 hours to Albany.



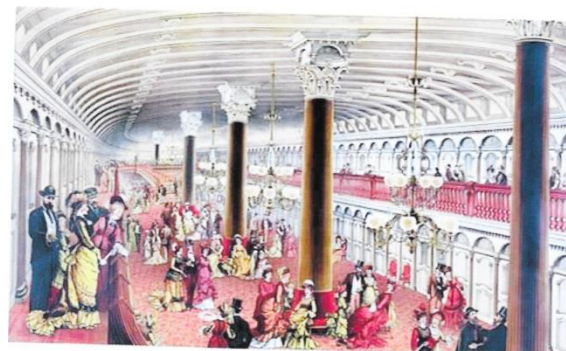
In 1855 the Hudson River Day Line was started by two gentlemen who purchased the steamboats "Daniel Drew" and "Armenia" and ran service between Albany and New York every day—one trip south followed by one trip north the next day. The "Daniel Drew" went into service in 1855 and was considered the "Jewel of the Hudson," setting speed records of 7 hours and 20 minutes from New York to Albany. She also had a steam calliope that attracted a lot of people as it traveled along the river. Ads were placed in 1863 for these

two ships to carry passengers from New York City for an unheard of price of \$1.50. About 22,000 people took advantage of this price which showed a nice profit for the company.

The company was considered the premier steamboat line on the Hudson River from the 1860's through the 1940's, carrying millions of passengers between New York City and Albany.

In the 1800's, without air conditioning, people living in tenements or homes in the city found reasons to escape the heat and overcrowding. One was a very special event, a memorable boat ride on a steamer on the Hudson River where they could feel any breeze that was coming off the river and the mountains of the Hudson Valley. Passengers donned their Sunday best and strolled along the deck to watch the paddle wheel go around and the banks of the river drift by. In most cases a straw hat was the standard attire, while sitting in a deck chair with a mint julip in hand

In the second half of the nineteenth century, steamships resembled floating palaces and a ride on a paddle wheel steamer on the river was a pleasant and memorable trip, even on the hottest day. There were lounges with writing tables, dining rooms, a men's salon and a ladies salon, also a barber shop and a bar. Interiors were fitted with velvet upholstered seating, crystal chandeliers, fine paintings and wall to wall carpeting. On many occasions an orchestra was provided for dancing and entertainment. Newsstands provided the latest newspapers. On rainy days passengers could move inside or go to one of the highly appointed dining rooms for lunch or dinner.



Major vacation destinations were the Catskill Mountain region, Bear Mountain State Park, Kingston Point Park and West Point Military Academy. These were great stopovers for hiking, walking or a nice picnic along the river.

The Hudson River Day Line was incorporated in 1899 and was in existence until 1948. In 1892 the Day Line transported 192,000 passengers. That number increased to 266,000 in 1902 with a large jump to 2 million in 1925.

A total of 16 steamers were part of the company fleet from 1887 to 1927. All ships were side-paddle steamers except the "Peter Stuyvesant" which was the only prop driven ship on the line. This ship was built in 1927 and was the last great boat for the Hudson River Day Line.

In 1912 the steamer "Washington Irving" was built as the largest and grandest of all ships of the Hudson River Day Line. She was 416 feet long and could accommodate 6,000 people on five decks, had a dance floor and bandstand for popular moonlight dances and could also travel at 23 mph.

By the 1930's, a three-hour air conditioned train trip to New York City would allow up to ten hours in the city for business or entertainment and a three hour return trip, all in one day. Paddle wheel steamboats would now be only wonderful memories. Trains would no longer be a dusty dirty way to travel.

In 1948 the steamer "Robert Fulton" made the last run of the Day Line. What Robert Fulton started in 1807, his namesake steamer ended in 1948. In September of 1971, a survivor of the Day Line, the Alexander Hamilton, finished the glorious run of the steamboat on the Hudson River.

Sources: Albany Gazette of 1807; New York State Library; Thought Company; Early Years of Steam boating by Peter Hess ; Hudson River Maritime Museum; Albany Institute of Art ;The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake.

WHAT IF

By Rod Correll

I am the son of the son of a German Jew, turned Ethicist, who immigrated to the United States in 1893 and founded a leather import-export business in New York City. Hermann Loewenstein was one of 13 children in a family living in Ellwangen, a small city near Stuttgart. His father was a lawyer and most of his male siblings were destined to become professionals. Hermann was headed down this path, matriculating at Oxford with plans to become a professor. Illness in early adulthood changed that trajectory; becoming nearly blind as he began his studies at university his life changed dramatically. With his dream dismantled, his family sought help. Relatives who owned a tannery in Ulm offered him a job and Hermann sailed to America to set up an office in New York. It turned out to be a good decision; the business flourished but I often wonder whether my granpere ever had regrets.

My father's dream of becoming an architect was also blocked, presumably because his grades in prep school were rather poor and his father felt that a career in the leather business would suit him better. Once again the decision, made for not by him proved to be the right one. Dad was a great salesman with a keen sense for fashion trends, a combination of skills that gave him pride and made the firm even more profitable during most of his leadership. Once again, however, I wonder whether he felt at peace with this decision and his role as successor of a legendary founder.

And how about my dream to become a teacher after I graduated from Yale? By then imports from Italy and Spain had started to flood into our market threatening the viability of our major customer base, manufacturers of high-grade ladies fashion footwear. There was also a problem on the supply side; consumption of veal in the U.S. was declining, the supply of calfskins was dropping and their price was rising. The handwriting was on the wall; our salad days were over. Despite these warnings my dad insisted I follow him into the firm. "Teachers are wimps" he told me and that was that. Succumbing to his will paid off handsomely but to this day I wonder why he was so insistent and what might have happened if I had had the guts to say no.

There are lessons to be learned from what I experienced, tales I hope I can tell in an engaging way in the memoir I plan to write while we are here at Avila. I've been very lucky! I'm still alive at 84, healthy and eager now to share the lessons I've learned, weighing the "whats" and living with the "ifs" my decisions precipitated.

