

Legacy Letter

Many lessons are learned during one's lifetime, some more important than others. I grew up on a small farm near Crystal Lake, Iowa, graduated from high school in 1941, enlisted in the U. S. Army Signal Corps in early 1942 shortly after Pearl Harbor, spent nearly two years in the South Pacific, enrolled at the University of Iowa in June of 1946, married Marian Weiland in August of 1946, graduated in 1949 and pursued a career in accounting, changed careers in 1957 to become a computer programmer with IBM, joined a start-up computer company in 1965 and founded another computer company named BancTec, Inc. in 1971. Marian and I have married 60 years, have a growing family including three married children, seven grandchildren and one great granddaughter.

Life has been very good to me, although not always easy. For example, I was fired from my very first job after graduating from high school. My best friend and I were determined to get off the farms and find jobs in the big city, so we went to Denver. With unemployment rates high and being only 17 years old, it was difficult. Finally, we heard that a Montgomery Ward mail order facility on South Broadway was hiring so we applied and they told us to report Monday to begin as "order fillers." They did not tell us that orders were filled on roller skates, skating around the huge facility to pick up items on the orders. Being farm boys, we had very little skating talents, so they fired both of us at the end of the first week because we could not skate well enough. My friend was so discouraged that he returned to Iowa, but I liked Colorado and finally found a job as shipping clerk at a wholesale magazine company making \$14.00 for a 40-hour week. Shortly thereafter came Pearl Harbor, followed 12 days later by my eighteenth birthday, so I enlisted in the Army. The lesson from this experience is: Think positive and remain determined.

When Marian and I got married on August 11, 1946, we could not find an apartment in Iowa City. Finally, a lady cleared out a corner area in her basement and furnished it with a bed, a gas stove and an ice box. After nearly a year, we moved into a small bedroom in an apartment building in order to be in line for the next available apartment. About six months later we finally got a small apartment. While I was attending the University and working part-time, Marian worked as a secretary in the office of President Hancher which in those days was located in the Old Capitol Building. We did not own a car until I graduated in 1949. The lesson from this experience is: Sacrifice now to help ensure your future; instant gratification is not the answer.

There are many words or phrases that can be used to identify keys to success, but the one that stands out in my mind is *pride*. A person who is always proud of what they have done consistently works hard to do a good job, which in turn leads to success in all of life's activities including marriage, family, friendships and career.

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