

Unforgettable Moments in Life

*of
Richard Lee Orey*

PROLOGUE:

There are times in life when God breaks into our humdrum existence and gives us an awesome moment so powerful, so beautiful, so soul-stirring that it never leaves our memory but remains as an inseparable part of us to our Hour of Death as an Unforgettable Moment in Life.

There are other instances in my life not inherently beautiful or soul-stirring but which in hindsight mark a memorable event in my life's journey--such as my crowd-cheering medal-winning performance that made me a high school State Champion finalist in the 800 meter run. That was over 61 years ago. Yet I can close my eyes and still see the stadium crowd rising as one and hear their thunderous yells of support as I raced across the finish line and collapsed in joyful exhaustion. I love that memory!

In sharing a few of my Unforgettable Moments in Life with you, I invite you to pause in reflection of your own life's journey. Recognizing your own Unforgettable Moments in Life may well be the beginning of a new maturity which you can claim and enjoy as a personal treasure.

BIRTH MOMENT

The first Moment in Life for me is one I've only read about in notations made by my mother in my Baby Book. But certainly for me it rates as an Unforgettable Moment in Life, especially considering the fact that in the throes of the economic Great Depression of the early 1930s, a young woman pregnant with twin baby boys attempted a self-abortion. One unborn baby died, one lived. I am the baby that survived.

As I enjoy my 79th year of living, I thank God for the gift of my life and the life of my two daughters and my two sons, the life of my two grandsons and the life of my great-granddaughter, none of whom would have been born had I not survived my birth Moment in Life.

One has but to linger awhile in a hospital nursery to truly know that the first moment of one's independent life in this world is an incredible event. I'm disappointed that I don't have a memory of my own breathtaking miracle of birth. But with my wife and my family, I am blessed beyond belief.

FATHER'S DEATH MOMENT

Think back, if you will, to one of the most impressionable memories of your very early life and you will re-experience an image that will never leave you. For me, it was when I was four years old and sitting beside my dying father's bed. For over 74 years, now, I have sorely missed what I've longed for all my life--a father. But I am grateful for this memory, tragic in consequence but stabilizing in emotions for I know from my own independent memory that I knew my father firsthand as a real person and that he knew me. Truly, this is an Unforgettable Moment in Life.

GOD'S GRACE MOMENT

Another Unforgettable Moment in Life came to me shortly after my father's death and occurred in church at my father's funeral. I remember strikingly to this day looking at the white flowers draped over his casket and feeling the overwhelming and comforting presence of God, most certainly for me a first moment in God's Grace. Never in 74 years since that moment have I ever doubted that God is everywhere and that God is never farther than a prayer away.

LIFE-THREATENING MOMENT

When I was 8 years old, I was diagnosed with Scarlet Fever, infectious kidney failure with blood in my urine and infections in my ears requiring eleven lancing surgeries. I was bedridden for over eight months without any visitors and never attended the fourth grade in school. At the time, I was not aware my life was endangered, but those eight months in bedridden isolation remain in my memory as an Unforgettable Moment in Life.

FIRST KISS MOMENT

The memory of my first kiss at age fourteen is ablaze in my mind as if it occurred just last week and not 64 years ago. Perhaps because the girl I shared this moment in life with shares one other Moment in Life with me--my first love.

MILITARY SERVICE MOMENT

At seventeen years of age, I graduated from high school and prepared to go to work for a local bank. But the Communist forces of North Korea invaded South Korea, and I enlisted in the United States Navy. Thankfully, nothing personally significant occurred in this period of time except I feel

gratified to have served my country during the Korean War.

WEDDING DAY MOMENT

The wedding ceremony of marrying my life's partner is as vivid now as it was when it happened in an evening ceremony in a crowded and softly lit church in a tiny village on the Winnebago Indian Reservation in the State of Nebraska. Our friend Doris Jensen sang *Oh, Promise Me* and *Always*. Our female presiding minister was a true novelty of the day: The Reverend Elsie Danskin. Even now, I close my eyes, and I see my lovely bride walking down the aisle on the arm of her father. I remember sliding the gold ring on her slender finger as if I were doing so right now, reliving an Unforgettable Moment in Life.

To have married and lived all my adult life with the person I shared my first kiss with and knew as my first love is nothing short of a magical and decades-long Unforgettable Moment in Life: Extraordinary and oh, so dear to my heart. We have grown old together, and we love every moment of it. For us, sharing every day as a "cute couple" is a Moment in Life.

FIRST CHILD MOMENT

Eleven months after our wedding, my world changed forever with the birth of our first child at Tripler Army Hospital in Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii. Keeping myself busy in the hospital as a new father, I used a cheap vending machine in the lobby to imprint a metal coin with my baby daughter's name and date of birth, a coin I still have, of course. My First-born and the births of each of our four children rank as Unforgettable Moments in Life.

PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS MOMENT

A first moment of professional success was uneventful when it happened: At the age of twenty-two, I was appointed by United States District Court Judge Charles G. Briggles as his Official Court Reporter, making me the youngest Official Court Reporter of a Federal Court in the entire country and at the time the youngest person ever to be so appointed.

Looking back, I have enjoyed many other moments of professional success, but this first bit of success sits in my memory as an Unforgettable Moment in Life.

OLD AGE MOMENT

Looking back over the course of my past 78 years, I recall many Moments in Life, far too many to include in this literary posting. I also have come to know

what has always been preached to me and to us all: Life is short.

When you're only 30 or 45 years of age, you never really consider the end of your life, only tonight or tomorrow. Then suddenly one day, everything changes. You look in the mirror and realize you're old. I mean, really old! From then on, everything changes. You become at one with the cancer patient, savoring every moment, every conversation, every touch of the hand of a loved one. That Old Age Moment, in itself, is a major, self-revealing Unforgettable Moment in Life.

CANCER MOMENT

The doctor's voice on the telephone came right to the point. "I'm calling to tell you I have the result back from the laboratory of your prostate biopsy. Mr. Orey, you do have cancer, and its aggressive."

To learn that you have malignant life-threatening cancer is an unforgettable moment. And living with malignant life-threatening cancer is unforgettable. At this date, after hundreds of pills, a series of life-changing chemotherapy injections and forty trips to the hospital to let my body be bombarded with intensive radiation treatments, my doctor reports, "Mr. Orey, your laboratory tests indicate zero presence of cancer. I'm going to continue to see you and test you every three months for the next three years, but the news just can't get any better than Zero. It may take another year or so for your body to recover from your treatments, but it's time for you to start going back to your regular activities. You've always been a vigorous, active man. Go canoeing, Mr. Orey. Go canoeing!" Now, that news is a real "Thank you, God" Moment in Life.

THE FINAL MOMENT:

Age grants a final and conditioning maturity. You come to realize that dying is but a part of the journey of living. With that awareness, I'm in no hurry--I love writing and growing roses and canoeing--but I'm ready for my final and greatest Moment in Life: Meeting my Creator!

"Thank you, God, for an extraordinary adventure."

EPILOGUE

Dear Reader, I invite your review of my Picture Section (attached). And I sincerely invite you to enhance your life by spending a few minutes viewing my posting of "*Lebensweisheit*" (Wisdoms of Life), the most significant item I have ever posted on Authorsden. Don't miss it!

Click here for the opportunity to change your life.

<http://www.authorsden.com/visit/viewarticle.asp?AuthorID=48512&id=45666>

RICHARD LEE OREY

Born Tuesday, 9:15 a.m., January 31, 1933

Salem, Oregon

1930s

Baby and Toddler Days



1940s

Little Boy Days



Late 1940s & 1950s

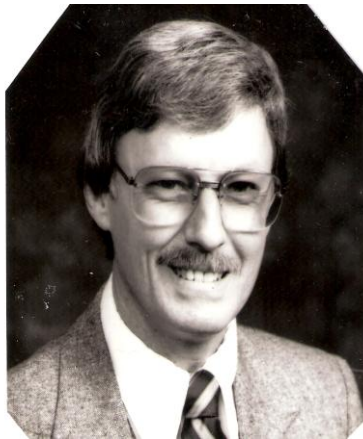
High School, Navy and Wedding Days



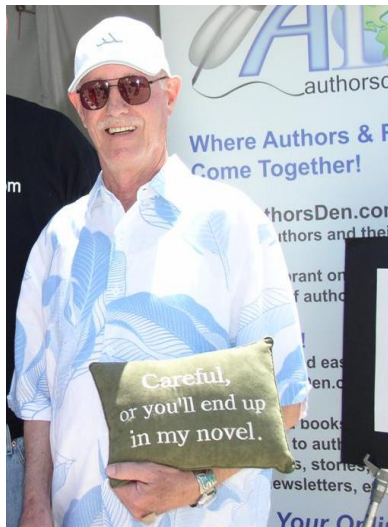
1950s-1960s-1970s
Court Reporting &
Young Family Days



1970s-1980s
Court Reporting, Writing &
Law Lecturing Days



1991-2011 & After
Retirement: Writing, Growing Roses & Canoeing Days



The Rose Garden of Richard Lee Orey

