

As a child, my father had an abundance of curiosity. This natural curiosity was a major part of why he became a great scientist. His colleagues and those closest to him, knew him to be personally motivated, self-governed, hard working, logical, organized and a very imaginative thinker. He enjoyed the complexities of a new challenge and was determined to see his ideas realized. He pursued them in a logical, orderly fashion. He was good at analysis and built theoretical models in order to understand his observations and put his plans into action. He believed in himself and wasn't easily swayed by alternate viewpoints. He would go the extra mile to insure that his ideas were realized. When Dad swung into action he became very focused, business-like and at times impersonal. He was independent and often enjoyed working by himself. After a day of teaching at BYU, he'd walk or ride his bike home for dinner. Afterwards, he would return to his lab or retreat to his home office with instructions to be left alone so he could focus on reading, studying and thinking about his ideas. His office was lined with over a thousand volumes of scientific, historical and religious books. He was a voracious reader with an appetite for knowledge that never seemed to be satisfied.

Though he was passionate about his profession, his life consisted of more than science, books and studying. Dad was a faithful and devoted father. He was a peace-loving person. As such, he didn't have the upper hand when it came to disciplining the children. He preferred to teach them through his good example and wise instruction. He was a deeply spiritual and religiously dedicated person. He gathered his family together for daily scripture study and family prayers. Weekly Family Home Evenings were NOT an option and often included lessons about the rewards of hard work, complete with a trip to our farm in Payson to weed the family vegetable garden. The real reward for the children came afterwards with a treat from the Dairy Queen. On Sundays he saw to it that all nine of us arrived at the church on time. Dad encouraged us to be active in our church callings and participate in compassionate service projects. He enjoyed participating in ward activities so he could show off his honky-tonk skills on the piano. At Christmas time he got the tractor out and provided fun for friends and family with hay rides and sled pulls through empty fields and snow packed parking lots. He enjoyed working at the Welfare Farm and got all the rest of us up at the crack of dawn to work alongside him.

He was an introvert. In social situations, his quiet nature sometimes made it difficult for others to get to know him. He enjoyed conversations and situations that included people of great intellect and organizations where his gifts were appreciated and where he could exchange thoughts and ideas with others having similar interests. In addition to his scientific pursuits, Dad was a dedicated Republican and true patriot. He enjoyed ice-cream, playing the piano, listening to music, dancing, engineering, reading, writing, geology, nature, farming and religion.

We took frequent and long summer vacations that included trips to dam sites, natural wonders, courthouses, and graveyards. One summer when Dad was too busy to take us on a vacation he gave each of us \$100 and took us on a shopping spree in Salt Lake City that included dinner at a fancy restaurant and movie tickets to My Fair Lady. I remember thinking that I was the richest kid in town. Another time he let the kids still living at home plan the vacation. We ended up driving to Waterton Glacier International Peace Park in Alberta Canada. We took the "Prowler" trailer so we could camp along the way. The first time I ever saw fireflies was on that trip. I remember Dad giving me a scientific explanation about the chemicals that make them glow, thereby attracting mates. He went on to explain how those chemicals could be extracted and used for scientific applications. On our way out of the park, we saw several bighorn rams at the side of the road. Dad stopped the car so we could admire the wildlife from the windows. That's the kind of stops I enjoyed. There were always "other" stops such as bathroom stops, stops to soak Mom's feet in a stream, and monuments. Dad loved to stop for monuments. After all, it was an educational opportunity for the whole family. Some of us didn't enjoy this activity as much as he did. He had to coax more than a couple of us from the car (sleeping or not) to gather around while he read the entire plaque and then added his own bit of knowledge on the subject.

I loved our vacations because that was a time when we saw a different side of Dad. He was more relaxed and laid back and laughed and joked around with us. This was a time when we saw our parents show their affection for each other; teasing, laughing and holding hands. The long hours of driving were filled with game playing, singing and listening to stories on the radio. Sometimes the fun was interrupted

with arguments and little annoyances like tattling, crowding each other, fighting over who got the window seat, or making noise when someone was trying to sleep. Dad could be heard saying, "Now, now . . ." when things got out of hand. Those vacations helped us grow closer together.

At times I felt like we must be poor because I never had a new bike or new skates, and rarely new clothes unless they were sewn by Mom. Dad and Mom were quite practical. If there was an available bike, why buy a new one? If there were clothes that could be passed down or if we had cloth to make them, why buy them? Furniture was refinished, sofas were recovered, used was good. We grew a garden every year and everyone helped weed, harvest and preserve what we picked. I grew up in the same house and never moved. Dad was satisfied with what we had and wasn't in the least bit materialistic. Even after all the children left home, Mom and Dad continued to live humbly in that same home. In spite of all the places Dad traveled, the people he met and the awards and publicity he received, Dad remained living as simply and as inconspicuously as he possibly could.

In their elder years, Mom and Dad asked me to be in charge of their health care, and gave specific and detailed instructions for me to administer when the time came that they could no longer care for themselves. Though Dad's health and mental acuity began to deteriorate perhaps as early as 1970, I didn't assume full care of Dad and Mom until 2002 when Mom was 81 and Dad was 83. Neither of them wanted to live in a rest home, and asked me to do what I could to help them live out their lives in their own home. I built a new home across the street where the Cheney's used to live, so I could be closer to them. One of Dad's greatest fears was that he might lose his mental abilities. In his Power of Attorney for Health Care document he wrote, "I wish to live and enjoy life as long as possible. However, I do not wish to receive medical treatment that will only postpone the moment of my death from a medical condition that is incurable, terminal or possesses a very high probability of being irreversible. Such medical condition may include, without limitations . . . irreversible brain damage or brain disease . . .".

Alzheimer's postpones the "moment of death" all by itself, steadily eating away the brain while a healthy heart ticks on and on. It was a long and difficult path, especially for Dad, but also for family and caregivers too. I don't wish to dwell on specifics from that period of his life, except to say that once in a while, on a good day, a little window would open and I could catch a glimpse of the Dad I knew before. On good days, we danced and laughed, hugged and took rides to the "Hall Mart" in Payson, went bowling and attended plays at BYU. We picked vegetables and flowers in the garden, sharing them with family and neighbors. We sat on the couch and looked through pictures, books and listened to the music he loved. But time passed and the Alzheimer's began to rob us of the good times. I longed for Mom to come and take my daddy home. When that time finally came, he still hung on. I stayed right there by his side all day and long into the night. When I left the room for a moment to get a cool cloth for his forehead, he departed. I thanked my Heavenly Father that he was finally free. Losing Dad was hard for me because he depended on me for everything. I'm relieved that he doesn't have to suffer any more, but I sure do miss him. It was an honor and a blessing to have been given that stewardship.