

COLLEGE DAZE

(Paul Riley's college experiences plus some family history)

In December, 1953, I finished high school in South Africa. My parents, John and Edna Riley, were Free Methodist Missionaries. They had served at Edwaleni for about ten years then had moved to Fairview Mission. My older brother, David, was already studying at Greenville College, a Free Methodist College, in Greenville, Illinois. The previous year, my younger sister and brother, Lois and Thomas had returned to the USA to attend Oakdale Vocational School, a Free Methodist Mission School, in Oakdale, Kentucky. I was the last child to leave home. My parents really felt lonely with no children at home, but they quickly "adopted" Trygvar Brauteseth and Anne Marie Holte, a newly engaged couple who felt called to be missionaries. Anne had grown up in the Congo. She was the daughter of missionaries. Later, both her parents were held hostage in the Congo for over a year by the Simba terrorists. They survived in spite of severe abuse and torture. By a miracle they escaped being killed! (They were rescued by "Mad Mike" Hoare and his group of South African Mercenaries!) Trygvar was a Norwegian-South African Builder who had committed his life to Christ. His youngest brother, Arne, had sat by me, in the same double desk, when we were in the first year of high school. But I had not met Trygvar. Their grandfather had come from Norway in 1882 with a group of settlers. They had settled on a large piece of land near Port Shepstone. They had built a Church which was dedicated in 1883. Trygvar and Anne were later married in that very Church! Trygvar spoke Zulu, was a good preacher, and had many skills so they were an ideal missionary couple. There was an empty house at Fairview Mission so the newly married couple stayed there and helped the Mission while they were deciding where the Lord wanted them. Imagine my parents' delight when the Brauteseths became Free Methodist Missionaries! When my parents returned to the States, in 1956, the Brauteseths replaced them. When we were in Swaziland, we often stayed with Trygvar and Anne near Johannesburg. They and their family also came to Swaziland to visit us and also to have surgery. The Brauteseths have retired in South Africa but are still active in the Church. Three times they have visited us here in Riverside. We consider them part of our family! Their son, Leif, is a doctor. Like me, he was influenced by Dr. Lowell Rice.

I arrived at Greenville in January, 1954, and started my pre-med studies. I found I had to have a driver's license, a social security number, register for the Draft, and get a Draft Card. I borrowed Fred Hildebrand's car and took my driving test to get a driver's license. In South Africa we drove on the left side of the road! Fred was my brother, David's, roommate. I was surprised when I easily passed the test. I later found out that a college secretary had failed her driving test numerous times. She was a good driver but would become hysterical whenever she took her driving test. She finally gave up, when, during her driving test, she drove through the only red light in town, and broadsided the only police car in town! Professor Carey took me to St. Louis to register for the Draft and apply for a Social Security number. I then get a job cleaning classrooms and working evenings at Gaffner's Garage selling gasoline, sweeping out the repair shop, cleaning up the grease and oil spills and picking up any tools the mechanics had left scattered around. I would also mow lawns on Saturdays with a push mower. I was paid one dollar a lawn, regardless of the size of the lawn!

I was used to dorm life. I had been in a boarding school in South Africa where we were taught to consider other people. I was surprised that some Greenville students felt, that, since they were away from the restraints of home, they could do as they pleased! They would turn up the volume of their radios, shout and yell at all hours of the night and not consider other students. Three boys from the Middle East said all Americans were crazy Jew lovers and would not listen to the other students. They would want to fight any student who tried to correct them! One of them even bragged that he had to

leave his country because he had tried to shoot a political leader of his country; but, because he was near sighted, he had missed! Because my parents were missionaries, my tuition charges were reduced by 25%. But all foreign students got a 50% reduction, even those who were bad-mouthing us!

That first summer I went to Summer School because I had missed the first semester of college. Friday and Saturday nights I worked as a janitor and night watchman at the Buckeye Glove Factory. I would work from 6pm to 6am. I would eat and then go to bed. "Peter" who lived in the adjacent room would wake up at 6am Saturday, turn his radio on full blast so he could hear it in the shower, then he would go eat, come back and go to work cleaning classrooms. He would leave his radio on all day! Since we had to leave our windows open because of the heat, and our two window frames were almost touching, it was impossible to sleep. I spoke to Peter, but he said since this was a free country, he could do as he pleased. Fortunately I had saved a burnt out tube from my radio. Before going to work, I would slip into Peter's room and exchange it for the same tube in Peter's radio. On Sunday evening, after I had caught up on my sleep, I would put the good tube back into the radio. That way Peter and I remained good friends! Peter never found out why his radio would stop working just on weekends!

A group of students, down the hall, specialized in all night Rook games. (AKA "Free Methodist Poker"). They would be so tired the next day, they often missed classes, or fell asleep in class. The night before exams they would "pull an all nighter", trying to catch up and study for the exam. But the next morning they, sometimes, slept through the exam and failed the course. Their rich parents didn't seem to want their sons' studies to interfere with their education!

The same group of boys spent a lot of time during their Rook games planning pranks. One day the students and faculty attended the chapel service to find that all the rows of faculty seating had been unscrewed from the floor, turned around backwards then screwed back down to the floor! The faculty had to sit facing the audience! One night all the students in Hogue Hall found their alarm clocks missing. The next day was Chapel. The president, Dr. H.J. Long, was scheduled to speak. As he started to speak alarm clocks started going off every two minutes. Some were too high to be reached, others were very well hidden, even inside the piano and organ. The faculty members were scrambling all over the building trying to silence the alarms. The students, and even some of the faculty, were roaring with laughter. Chapel had to be cancelled.

The summer of 1955, Garner Baldwin, an engineer in Columbus, Ohio, found work for me, and 3 other Greenville Students, at the factory where he worked. Hans Heckman, who was from Germany drove us there. We stayed in the Baldwin's basement while we worked in the factory. The Baldwins were Greenville Alumni. Their three daughters also attended that College. "Jared" one of the Arab boy's, was my roommate. Most of the time, he was well behaved. But if someone said anything good about Jews, he would fly into a rage and express his hatred for Jews and anyone who had Jewish friends. He also would not listen to any advice. He slept on the other side of the room. He had a nice shaded reading lamp by his bed. I just had a bare 100 watt bulb hanging over the head of my bed. The switch was bad so the bulb had to be screwed in or out a few turns to turn it on or off. I worked the day shift while Jared worked the evening shift. To annoy me Jared would turn on my light when he returned at one o'clock in the morning. He would then read for about an hour then fall asleep leaving my light on. I tried to carefully suggest that we change beds if he liked my light but this made him rant about me being a crazy American who thought he could tell the rest of the world how to behave. He offered to settle the dispute with his fists. Since, he always carried a knife, I backed down and told him he was free to use my light whenever he so desired. After all, this was a free country!

The next day I stopped by a camera store and bought a "Press 100" flash bulb. It was the size of a 100 watt bulb and had the same screw fitting. Just before I went to sleep I carefully replaced my light bulb with the flash bulb. Jared woke me up that night slamming doors and doing all he could to annoy me. I covered my face and shut my eyes. Suddenly there was a blinding flash, then a scream followed by a string of Arab curse words. Finally all was quiet. I carefully peeked out from under the covers. There was Jared. His bedside lamp was finally being used. He had opened a two pound can of Vaseline and had plunged his burned right hand into it. He was still asleep when I left for work the next day. His hand was still buried in the can of Vaseline. I saw him come to work as I was leaving that day. He was still seeing spots in front of his eyes. He had blisters on two of his fingers! "Paul, don't touch your light, it has a short. Look how it burnt my hand," I was told. "Maybe God doesn't want you to annoy me." I replied. Jared treated me with respect after that. He stayed far away from my light! The "Jewish Method of Persuasion" had worked where dialogue and reason had failed. After all, this method has worked for several thousand years!

In a Sociology class there were two Arab boys that kept telling the professor that the Greenville girls were all racists. They would not date Arab boys. The professor agreed with them saying that all those girls were a disappointment to him. I knew that was not true; two other Arab boys were very popular with the American girls. Later they married Greenville students. I finally had heard enough so I spoke up: "These girls are not racists! They know where you go on Saturday afternoon. Would you want your sister to date those who go with you?" Immediately these two boys shut up. There were no more racial discussions. They thought no one knew, that, Saturday afternoons, they and their friends would drive to East St. Louis and visit the Red Light District. I was a member of the International club at Greenville so I learned a lot about each foreign student. Since I grew up in Africa I was considered one of them most of the time.

My friend "Harry" was a Christian who was determined to be "perfect". He would spend hours on his knees "praying". But then he would have to "confess" that he fell asleep, then, he would fall asleep while he was on his knees confessing this "sin". He was afraid that he would be misinterpreted and therefore be guilty of lying. He kept asking for forgiveness. If he told someone the time but later found that his watch was wrong by a few minutes, he had to find that person and confess that he had told a lie. Then he had to kneel and ask God's forgiveness. His was a very cruel religion! It did not allow for the frailties of human nature!

Harry hitchhiked back and forth to his home for vacations. One day, when he was about to leave to go back to College, his mother, who was worried about him hitchhiking, pinned a five dollar bill inside his undershirt, so he could pay bus fare if he had problems catching a ride or if he was robbed. Sure enough, a motorist picked him up, drove down a remote dirt road, and robbed him at gunpoint, even taking his wristwatch! "Is that all your money?" the gunman asked. "Yes it is." Harry replied. Harry was told to get out of the car; then the car sped off. Immediately Harry felt the money inside his undershirt. He screamed and ran after the car. But the driver drove even faster leaving Harry covered with dust. Harry then got another ride to College. He thought he had committed the "Unpardonable Sin" since he could not find the robber and confess to telling him a "lie". He even wanted to advertise in the newspaper promising to give the robber the rest of his money. He spoke to the pastor and some professors because he felt so guilty. Somehow Harry failed to realize that Someone had atoned for such "sins" hundreds of years before. Hopefully, he finally realized that Christ had died for us because we all are "Imperfect."

I soon found out that several girls at Greenville College were intent on getting their "Mrs. Degree." They seemed to know all the tricks to get guys to notice them and start dating them, then convincing the guys that two can live cheaper than one. But then unexpected "blessings" would come along. A friend of mine was still struggling along with six "unexpected gifts". He was living in condemned housing, and trying to study behind a curtain while the six kids were making quite a racket on the other side of the curtain! He was working full time and attending College part time! I was determined not to be trapped. I quickly decided I would not date until I was through College. Two girls thought otherwise. "Betty" was the most persistent! She had dated me for TWIRP week (AKA "Sadie Hawkins's Week"). She would sit by me in Chapel! She would meet me at the door of the classroom or the dorm, walk me to my classes; then, wait outside to walk with me to lunch or supper. I finally had to wait until everyone had left the classroom then sneak out through the window to lunch. Betty finally gave up on me and found another "victim". They were soon married, had children, and never finished college.

My older brother, David, as a freshman at Greenville College, had fallen in love with a senior, Annie Robinson. After graduating, she started working, teaching in a Christian Day school run by Los Angeles Pacific College (LAPC). Being apart was too much for David. So, when he finished his first year, he hitchhiked to Los Angeles where they were married. David then attended LAPC for a year. David and Annie felt responsible for David's two younger brothers, Paul and Thomas, and his sister, Lois. My parents were still in Africa. In the spring of 1955, they bought an old Cadillac limousine and a trailer and moved back to Greenville. David started his senior year at Greenville and Annie worked for the College. My Folks sent a down payment for a house, which David and Annie purchased for \$5100. It was at 213 East Winter. My sister, Lois, graduated from Oakdale Academy and then came to live with us. She started College at Greenville. My younger brother, Tom, came with Lois and attended Greenville High School. When my parents returned, from South Africa, in 1956, David and Annie moved into an apartment and left them in charge of their house. That year their daughter Judyth was born.

In South Africa, I became interested in Photography. The Africans wanted their pictures taken, but refused to buy the pictures. They said I was deliberately making their skin too dark! One day I accidentally printed some of their pictures on a soft grade of photographic paper. Those pictures sold like hotcakes. From then on, I printed the pictures on that grade of paper which made the skin a lighter shade. I was able to recoup my losses. At Greenville College I bought photo equipment, including an enlarger, from Wolfgang Leitner, a German student. I took and developed pictures for the College Paper, The Papyrus. I also took pictures for the Yearbook and also took and developed some Wedding Photographs.

I was a track star at Port Shepstone High School in South Africa. I won 440 yards, half mile, Mile, and Cross Country races there. But after spending a month on the boat and gaining 15 pounds, I never regained all my stamina. My junior year, I ran track at Greenville, won a few races, but did not have much time to train. I had to spend a lot of time studying. My extra-curricular activities did not leave any time for girls, so I graduated unscathed!

While Tom was in high school, he hung out around the College. He related better with the College students. Most of his classmates were less mature! He played on the newly formed College Soccer Team. He also worked on Campus in the Snack bar run by Kenneth Coffman, an older student who had served in the Marine Corps. A group of "rowdies" in Town loved to harass the college students. They were upset that the college girls refused to date them. They also objected to all the Campus rules. They would drive past the dorms late at night, honking their horns, shouting obscenities and looking for fights. One night, when Tom was working at the snack bar, hostilities came to a head. A group of the trouble makers all entered the snack bar, sat in a row of seats, lit up their cigars and cigarettes, and

started blowing acrid smoke all over the place while they watched the TV. Several of the students reminded them of the rules but the reply was; "Just try to make us stop." Ken Coffman warned them but got the same reply! Ken then returned and told them this was their final warning. Tom, always a peace maker, came up to group leader and whispered; "I don't want you to get hurt, I just want to warn you that Ken Coffman was a Judo instructor in the Marines. The rowdies left in a big hurry, and never returned, proving they were all cowards at heart!

David and Annie's daughter, Judyth, was born in 1956. They joined the Mission of the Kansas Yearly Meeting of Friends. They were assigned to Mission Radio work in Burundi, but first they had to spend a year in Belgium, learning French and some Flemish. That year, my sister, Lois, married Duane Norden, from Nebraska. He also moved in with us in our house. I slept on the living room couch. I was able to study late without disturbing the rest of the household. After Duane graduated with me in 1957, their daughter Linda was born. Then they moved to Nebraska, where Duane worked as a State Bank Examiner. Thomas joined the Army at the age of 17. He started as a paratrooper but ended up as a Chaplain's assistant. He spent three years in Germany. He then returned to Greenville and attended College with his dad! Both graduated.

While in College, Tom married Faye Allen, a nursing student. I had met her at Irving Park Free Methodist Church in Chicago. She felt called to be a missionary. She was taking Pediatrics at the Children's Hospital in Chicago. I encouraged her to get her B.Sc. in Nursing at Greenville College. I also told her I had a handsome brother there. Things worked out as I had hoped. She also obtained her "Mrs. Degree". They were married! After graduating from College, Faye started the Nurses' Training Program at Olivet College. In 1967 they went to Swaziland as Nazarene Missionaries. My mother worked in the College laundry. My father pastored a Church of God, and worked stoking furnaces for the College. When I left for Medical School, in 1957, he took over my job reading water meters for the town. My mother was amused by the wife of a new professor. The professor had been a School Superintendent in another county. One day the professors wife naively stated; "I don't know why my children don't get any A's in their classes at Greenville High School. They always made A's where my husband was superintendent," The other laundry ladies just rolled their eyes and said nothing!

Few people knew my father was assisting shut-ins and others who could not pay for extra help. Bro. Houts and his wife had retired from the Ministry many years previously. The man's nose was disfigured by previous cancer surgery, so that he made funny noises when he breathed. Still he insisted on sitting on the front seat in Church. He also had a huge hernia that was visible through his clothes. My father walked about half a mile to check on this couple morning and night. He would come at night and "bank" their furnace when they were going to bed. Early in the morning my dad would stoke and fire up the furnace so the house would be warm when they got up. One man would mow their lawn for them. But no one seemed to see that the back yard was being neglected. One Saturday, several volunteers were recruited to clear the back yard which was overgrown with weeds. It had begun to look like a jungle. Retired professor, Enoch Holtwick, came with a large scythe. Finally there was just a narrow strip of "jungle" left. With a mighty swipe the professor cleared the patch, then said; "Dr. Livingston, I presume".

My dad graduated from college in 1962. He was 56 years old. They then moved to Nebraska where he pastored Free Methodist Churches. He pastored in Kearney, Ringold, Edison, Beaver City, and Ansley. My mother, Edna, graduated from Teachers' Training College in Kearney, Nebraska. She then taught grades 1-8 in rural one room school houses wherever her husband served. She said she did not want her pastor to have to work at a second job! My dad was careful to pay into Social Security. The farmers in the

Churches would often give my parents meat and other farm produce. My dad would thank these farmers and give them a receipt for the fair market price of the donated items. He would also report this as income on his Income Tax returns. The farmers were impressed. They said, with other Pastors, they often did not get even a "Thank you"! John made the most money after he retired. His social security payments exceeded any previous salary he had received! He and My mother retired in Ansley, Nebraska, across the street from the Campgrounds. One year, during our furlough, while visiting my parents, I attended a wonderful meeting, in the Tabernacle, on the Campground. People lined the altar. There were a lot of public confessions and testimonies. "Peter", who's radio had kept me awake on weekends, the first year I was in college, was there. I was tempted to stand up and "confess" to him, tongue in cheek, about how I had silenced his radio. That way I would get a lot of attention. I then realized that I would cause a lot of laughter and change the spirit of the meeting. Instead I praised the Lord and told how the Lord was healing and changing lives in Swaziland. Peter died a few years ago. I never "confessed" to him. Maybe I should have! Anyway, now he knows.

I had to study very hard but my grades were not perfect. At least two other Pre-Med students had better grades. Fortunately they did not apply to University of Illinois. I knew I could only afford the tuition at the University of Illinois, School of Medicine, in Chicago, so only applied to that place. The Lord had called me to be a missionary doctor, so I trusted Him to do the rest! I found out later that most of the students who applied were from the Chicago area. The University was obligated to take at least one student from each county. Since I was the only student that applied from Bond County, I was accepted. I was offered a scholarship from the Farm Bureau. I would have to pay them back by working for five years in a farming community of their choice. But I felt that I needed to go back to Africa as soon as I could. Miraculously, I was able to graduate from Medical School free of debt. When I went to pay on my last semester's tuition it had been paid in full. I have never found out who paid it. My friends and acquaintances have denied paying it.

The summer of 1959, I stayed in Chicago and worked at Wesley Memorial Hospital in Evanston as a Nursing Assistant. This was a milestone for me. I helped care for the City Assessor and Father Kennely, the Catholic Bishop of Chicago. I gave him my testimony. He then told me I was right. He said that he did not agree some of the dogma of his Church, but felt he was helping to gradually make the necessary changes in the Church. I also met Dr. Jerry Swan, who was a resident in Ophthalmology. He told me about Butterworth Hospital, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Dr. Swan even drove me up to Grand Rapids where he showed me the Hospital and introduced me to his friends, including Stu Peterson and Dr. Blocksma. I stayed overnight at the Hospital and observed emergency operations. Many of the doctors there were Christians. Some were ex Missionaries. Dr. Ralph Blocksma, a Plastic Surgeon. was President of the Christian Missionary Society. When he was a Missionary Doctor in Pakistan, he saw several beautiful women whose noses had been cut off by their jealous husbands. So the doctor returned to USA and trained to be a Plastic Surgeon. Then he returned to Pakistan and became an expert in rebuilding noses for those suffering ladies. Through Dr. Blocksma, the Summer of 1960 I worked for two weeks as a "Camp Doctor" at Camp Hayo Wenta, a YMCA boys' camp on Torch Lake in Northern Michigan. It was a real vacation for me. I learned archery, wood carving and lapidary. The lake water was crystal clear and refreshing. The summer of 1966 I worked again for two weeks at that camp. My wife Martha and my two daughters also enjoyed the camp. Several times, while I was a medical student, I was paid to baby sit for the Swans.

At Wesley Memorial Hospital I met some of the House Staff and medical students from Northwestern University. I also saw Neurosurgeon, Loyal Davis, who was Nancy Reagan's Step father. He was Chief of Surgery. The students said Dr. Davis was very demanding and mean to them. They told me that while on

the OB service, they had to spend three weeks living at a house in the ghettos. They had to go out to do home deliveries in shacks and hovels. It was traditional, for whoever delivered the baby, to name the baby. On the wall of the house where the students slept was a huge sign:- ANY STUDENT CAUGHT NAMING A BABY LOYAL DAVIS WILL BE EXPELLED IMMEDIATELY! I then realized why so many of the young boys we saw in the Free Pediatric Clinics at Cook County Hospital were named LOYAL DAVIS. An intern at Wesley Memorial Hospital told how he got tired of being “abused” by Dr. Loyal Davis. He decided to fight back. Dr. Davis kept telling him that everything he did was wrong. Once when he was assisting the doctor; instead of asking the intern to let go of a retractor, Dr. David hit his knuckles with a clamp. That hurt! So the intern picked up a bigger clamp and rapped Dr. Davis’s knuckles. Both men glared at one another for a few seconds, Dr. Davis then said:- YOU HIT ME HARDER THAN I HIT YOU. Then Dr. Davis resumed the surgery as if nothing ever happened. Later, I heard, that out of over a hundred applicants for the Neurosurgery Residency that very intern was selected by Dr. Davis.

The summer of 1957, after I graduated from College, I stayed in Greenville for the summer. I worked painting for the College and reading water meters for the City. I met Martha Thomas who was a school teacher taking further education courses. The previous year she had been there in College, but I never noticed her! She was from Western Pennsylvania. She was a graduate of Vennard College in University Park in Oskaloosa, Iowa. (formerly Chicago Evangelistic Institute, when Martha started in Chicago). She was saving up money from teaching so she could train to be a nurse. Our first date was attending camp meeting together. When Summer School ended, I went home with her to Atlantic Pennsylvania, then back home by train. On my vacations, I went by train or got a ride with a nurse who lived near Martha but worked in Chicago. Martha had been born in Sharon, Pennsylvania. Thanksgiving, 1958, I went by train to see Martha. She had started training at Meadville City Hospital School of Nursing. Because of her dad’s health, her parents had gone to Mesa, Arizona, for the winter, leaving Martha’s older sister, Jean and her Husband, Wesley Sperry, in Charge of the dairy farm. The first night I was there, there was a power failure. I helped Wesley milk over fifty cows by hand, so I was “in” with the family! Both of us graduated in early June 1961; Martha from Meadville City Hospital School of Nursing in Meadville, Pennsylvania, June 5. I graduated from University of Illinois, School of Medicine, June 9. We were married a few days later, at her home Church, in Pennsylvania, on June 13, her father’s birthday. Then we moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I started my internship and residency in Surgery. Our three girls were born there. I then spent two years in the Army. Then we were Medical Missionaries in Swaziland. Our girls graduated from Point Loma Nazarene College.

I am glad we waited until we were both through school before we were married. The main thing is that we let the Lord lead us and tried to always make sure that we were in the center of His will. I am glad I met the right girl after I was through college. She has stayed with me now for over fifty years. We served as Nazarene Missionaries to Swaziland for sixteen years, then, I worked as a surgeon here in Riverside until I retired at the end of June in 2002. We have raised three lovely daughters. Greenville College was a great starting point. The teachers and workers tried their best to prepare us so that we could make a difference in this world! We have retired but are still trying to help others. I hope my recollections will help some young people to follow God’s Plan for their lives.

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