

## DAISY AND BILL

Daisy and I have had some difficult times. Refer to [stealingali.com](http://stealingali.com) for the story of the rocky beginnings of our marriage when our youngest was the victim of parental kidnapping and taken to the middle-east on two awful occasions. We have persevered and will celebrate our thirty-fifth wedding anniversary in 2009. Now retired, we seem to have enough resources with two pensions, social security and modest investments. We are confronted with the issues of aging but have left most financial worries behind.

Our lives together have been rich with family, adventure, travel, fun but we've had our troubles and sorrows like everyone else. Since this is the story of my life and times I want to preface my remarks by saying that Daisy has been the centerpiece of my existence. Perhaps, even before we met, she was the girl of my adolescent dreams.

Daisy and I met in person on



1974 Honeymoon. - Restaurante del Lago in Chapultepec Park, Mexico City.



These two photos are from our first home together. We could have bought the house for a song with nothing down but we were so troubled by harassment from Daisy's ex, David Younes, that we tried to avoid him by moving to another rented house without leaving a forwarding address. In retrospect it was a very bad decision. In any event we always made our homes as nice as possible. A friend, Armando Garcia, built the bar for us. The furniture and red gown were ours but the mural came with the house.



Saturday, August 19, 1967. I remember the date because it was my first day at Siegal Medical Group - The Overweight Medical Clinic.

There were seven clinics plus the Executive office, each at a different strategic location in South Florida. Hialeah, Downtown Miami, Coral Gables, Miami Beach, Fort Lauderdale, North Miami Beach and Naples.

I left my job at the bank on a Friday and wanted to take a few days off. Carolyn was pregnant with Jeff and due to deliver very soon. Dr. Siegal, however, always "Type A," insisted that it was urgent that I get started. "Right Away!" he said. So I went to work for The Overweight Medical Clinic on a Saturday morning. Just a half day, he said, to get my feet wet.

I'd met Dr. Siegal through his lawyer, who was also his former brother-in-law, Bernard Goldfarb. Bernie came into the First National Bank seeking a large loan for business expansion My job in the

installment loan department was dealing with larger loans for business, yachts, aeroplanes and garbage trucks and such. Our bread and butter was financing the "Floor plan" at Ford dealers to gain the right of first refusal for all car loans generated at the dealerships. I was a minor cog. I spent a lot of time analyzing Ford dealers' financial statements.

I heard Bernie out and accepted personal financial statements. Bernie said the good Doctor was too busy helping patients lose weight to come in himself.

In a short time, perhaps the next day, Bernie was back in my little office to get a fuller ex-

planation as to why I'd called him to say that the bank had refused to make the loan. I told him that it was nothing detrimental - the bank was just not able to lend depositor's money to small businesses that were not major bank deposit customers. It was the correct decision and Bernie had to accept it.

I was very surprised when Bernie called me the next week to say that he was impressed with my abilities to communicate and expertise with banking. "Would you," he said, "consider leaving the bank for a higher paying job?"

I told him "no thanks." But I was flattered by his offer to meet Dr. Siegal. When the lawyer called again, with a little more flattery, I agreed to interview.

The interview went well. I agreed to consider working for Dr. Siegal as The practice's Administrator or General Manager for a wage of \$10,400.00 per year. This was a big increase since, although rich in benefits, the bank didn't pay well. We were always strapped by payday. I consulted with Carolyn of course. She said, "Do whatever you think best."

Daisy and I met that Saturday. I became the General Manager - Administrator, of Siegal Medical Group. I started there in 1967. The signs on our offices said *Overweight Medical Clinic* and we treated people for obesity.

There were seven medical offices and a headquarters office on Biscayne Boulevard and N.E. 20th Street when I began. The loan that didn't happen would have been used to convert this free-standing building into the headquarters for the enterprise with an overweight clinic at the same location.

One of the first things I did was to recommend abandonment of the location and renting a smaller space above our clinic on U.S. 1 in Coral Gables. It was much cheaper. We were able to abandon the old lease because Bernie wrote good tenant leases, using shell corpora-



Judging from my ponytail haircut, this was taken in about 1995.

## Bill's Journey ~ Daisy and Bill

tions and escape clauses.

We worked in cramped spaces for a couple of years then upgraded to a better, roomier suite of offices at 720 N.W. 27th Avenue. By this time we'd added locations in Hollywood and Lauderdalehill and needed the room for staff and supplies.

Daisy, on the recommendation, of Dr. Siegal, came to work at our central office on N.W. 27th Avenue and N.W. 7th Street in about 1970.

That location did double duty. We moved our "Downtown Office" there and used an adjoining suite of offices to house a crew including myself, attorney Bernie Goldfarb, Bernice the bookkeeper (Dr. Siegal's sister), the supply sergeant Gloria Mendosa, and Lyndol Touchstone, Dr. Siegal's future wife, who worked as our personnel manager.

Dr. Siegal was too much of a non-traditionalist to have a personal office and preferred working out of his car or on the tennis courts with one the first-ever mobile phone available to the public. He was very smart. Sometimes he worked very hard. Sometimes he didn't work at all. The role I most remember him playing is that he often led the organization as my chief critic. Sonny, if you are reading this, you were a great boss most of the time.

**TO FAR AWAY PLACES** - I have been to a lot of different places, mostly traveling for fun but some of it was business. Daisy also enjoys traveling and we have been devoted traveling companions.

Here's a list of foreign places I've visited: \* Indicates solo trips when Daisy wasn't along. Bold indicates longer vacation trip:

• indicates a cruise stop. The brackets show the estimated number visits and number of days I've been in each place: The Bahamas (10/30) Cuba\* (1/1) Jamaica \*(1/1) Colombia\* (3/90) Mexico

5/45) Japan (1/3) **Thailand** (1/30)

**Costa Rica** (1/30) **Spain** (4/70) **Italy**

(2/37) The Vatican (1/1), Portugal,

Azores, Madeira (4/4)• Engalid 1/3

**France** (2/13) Germany (2/4) Austria

(1/1) **Bahrain** (1/60) Abu Dhabi (1/3)

Lebanon (1/1) England (1/3) **Venezu-**

**ela** (2/30) Portugal (2/2)• Bermuda

(1/1)• Barbados (1/1)• Curacao (1/1)•

St. Thomas (1/1)• St. Martin (1/7), Etc,

Etc.



I had a little apartment on the top floor of this building at 1924 NW 24th Ct. in Miami where I lived when I was courting Daisy. My favorite meal was **Puerco Frito**. I got the recipe from a restaurant. Boil pork in Mojito marinate sauce. (Cuban markets have Mojito) When the liquid is gone and the meat is browned toss.

in some onion slices and stir. Serve with rice, black beans and fried plaintains. For **Black Beans**- fry strips of green peppers, coarsely chopped onions and a little garlic. Add bay leaves, and a little vinegar, vino seco sugar and salt and pepper to taste. Add the mess to a coupla cans of black beans. Buy very ripe **plaintains**. Store them in a paper bag under the sink until they are ready to toss into the garbage. Then slice with a butter knife and fry the sticky little buggers in olive oil. They look nasty before you fry them but you'll be glad you cooked them instead.

## Bill's Journey ~ Daisy and Bill

My dad traveled during and after WW II until 1955. One of my favorite songs as a boy was Bing Crosby crooning *Far Away Places acapella*. I read about adventures in other lands so I had the bug before I twelve years old. I never thought that I'd get to the places in that song but I'm glad to have had the opportunities.

If you are still reading this journey, I guess you're hooked. To get the real skinny about the start of our marriage, you really have to visit [stealingali.com](http://stealingali.com).

It's hard to write about relationships. I can only tell you that Daisy and I have ended up in a good place. The kids are grown and now nurture their own families. We are close to all of our offspring and grandchildren too.

One of the drivers for this effort to write this down is my desire to have all of our children know and love each other. My "Bucket list" is not too long. The biggest items include finishing *Bill's Journey* and visiting with the kids.

By visiting with the kids I mean to have them all in the same room at the same time to make sure that they've had an opportunity to know each other in the same sweet way that I know and love each of them.

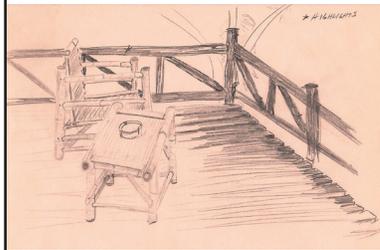
**By kids I mean Kim, Bill, Jeff and Kris and their spouses. At least ten people including**

The tropical Gulf of Thailand was just a few yards away. Our wrap-around porch was the perfect place to curl up with a good book. I forget what I was reading at the time but you can be sure that I had a book with me.



These sketches are mementos of our Thailand trip and time spent on Koh Samui. We stayed in this sweet oceanfront cabin at the Mae Nam Resort for only fifteen dollars a night.

Friends Norma and Peter Joyce were with us and they had a similar hut down the beach.



We had a good hot lunch on this little boat - typical Thai food nicely prepared consisting mostly of rice and beans with plenty of veggies. I took the photo from the long-tail boat on the next page.



The landing on Mae Koh's surf went well but they had to reem-bark us on the other side of the islet because of high waves on our landing beach. It was a bit of a hike and somewhat scary for some of the passengers.

**me and Daisy. I believe that this will happen at my funeral but it would be just great, beyond words, for me to be alive at the event.** Grand children too and even brothers and sisters. I wish that all my friends and family could be there.

So I'm planning to do it in December 2009 just before the holidays. Most of major characters will be there already so it won't be as hard at that time of the year as it might seem.

Jeff and Carol Serle have already agreed to let me use their home for the party. Invited everyone. Wow!

**Sigh. Kim can't make the trip and we've postponed. Sigh.**

**Here's a little travel story about Thailand.** - This was our first long journey together. We went to Thailand for a month in January 1992 with Norma and Peter Joyce. Daughter Kim was working for United Airlines and a Parent's Trip was one of her great benefits. We

could go once a year, as far as we liked, as many stops as we wanted - business class for very little cost. Air fees were less than \$500.00 from Knoxville, Chicago, Japan Thailand, San Francisco and return.

We caught up with the Joyces in Bangkok and immediately learned that Thailand was a comfortable place to be. Thais treat their foreign visitors with the nicest smiles and courtesies we had ever received. We strolled after midnight through a large, dimly lit public park which



Ang Thong National Park, in the Gulf of Thailand, 20 miles off Koh Samui, has 42 pristine islands. Many of the islands are uninhabited, and all are stunning: sheer, forested volcanic peaks surrounded by crystal-clear waters. The salt water lake in the cone of Mae Koh's volcano was an inspiration. There was a platform built near the top of the trail to give hikers a rest.



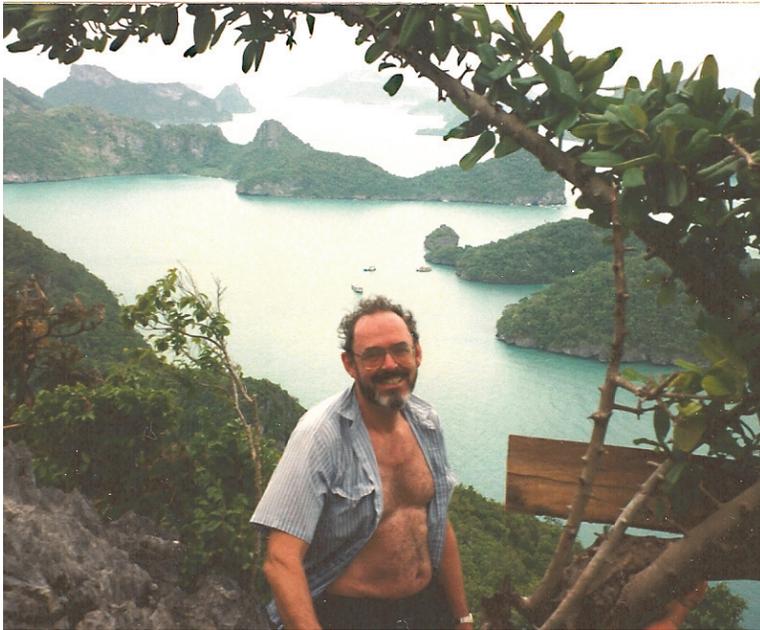
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was populated with lots of city folks, locals, including vendors, and never had a problem. To the contrary, people went out of their way to bow with folded hands and say, "Sawadee Kup." (Hello) and Chock Dee Kup. (Good luck) The women finished these ritual phrases with a Kah instead of Kup.



Samui Sonthaews got loaded with people. Sitting inside with my knees and hips pressed against fellow passengers, I could not see out. I loved standing on the back with wind blowing!

We journeyed to mountainous Chang Mai in the overnight bus to see the sights, to ride



Bill near the top of the volcano. Notice how tiny our boat looks just over my head. It's a long way down.

It was easier going up than down. The hiking-swimming party is sitting on sharp rocks and inching down feet first.



elephants through primitive villages, and to pole down a shallow river on a bamboo raft. We loved the country, the beautiful food, the pleasant interactions with people and the care with which Thailanders conduct their lives. The country is Buddhist which shapes behavior in a positive way.

We traveled by plane to the island of Koh Samui in the Gulf of Thailand. The airport had no hangers for planes or any visible facilities. We seemed to land in a beautiful botanical garden. We had no reservations but were easily able to get accommodations at the Mai Nahm Resort. It was a seaside collection of thatched bungalows clustered around a larger thatched structure which had a simple open-air restaurant and a lounge where we could watch TV and mingle with other guests. There were possibly thirty guests total and we were the only Americans.

We had many fine days here ranging the island by jeep and song-

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thaew. The rented jeep was not really needed because the local transport was by songthaew bus; a small pick-up truck with facing benches in back. We found that we could go anywhere in the island for the baht equivalent of a dime. Using running boards they could hold fifteen passengers. They would come along every few minutes.

Our most ambitious excursion was a day on a ship cruising Ang Thong National park. The vessel held about eighty passengers. They fed us lunch and made two stops on islands in the park. We got off and were landed on the beach using a stout little long tail boat that held about fifteen people.

The second stop was on gorgeous Mae Koh Island. Daisy and the Joyces wore relatively fragile flip-flop sandals and when were told that we could hike to the top of the volcano they sensibly declined. I, on the other hand, wore my sturdy Teva sandals and climbed the raspy rocks of the volcano to find the most beautiful lake ever. When our party of ten or so Europeans, French I think, stripped off their clothing and jumped in. I was flabbergasted by the avalanche of nude bodies. I jumped in with them but I was already wearing my bathing suit and didn't even think of skinny dipping. My bad. It was a grand outing - one of the highlights of the trip for me. I still wear the Tevas and believe that they will last longer than me!

A few days later the Joyces and the Serles sought out different routes home. Norma and Peter flew to Hawaii Daisy and I took a ferry to the mainland and an overnight train back to Bangkok - second class. They fed us the usual rice and veggies for dinner. We slept on beds that folded into the coach's overhead and used curtains for privacy.

We met up with Kim and her then husband D.J. Mitchell in San Francisco for a few more fun days before returning to our mountain home in Bryson City, North Carolina.

We vacationed with Norma and Peter on several other occasions. In 1994 we spent a month in Costa Rica and in 2005 the four of us visited Spain for a month. Somewhere in between we took an eleven night Southern Caribbean Princess Line cruise with them and have spent pleasant weeks at their part-time homes in San Miguel D'Allende, Mexico and St. Augustine, Florida.

**FOOD TO LIVE BY** - I have so many fond memories that relate to food. Perhaps I can tell you a bit about my life and times by relating the following stories.

**BAKED BEANS** - As you realize by now I was a very poor and very dumb student when I started at Hofstra College in 1955. I thought that I wasn't meant to work during the school year and began to lose weight rather than scrounge around for a job. I faithfully checked the mail every day to see if Dad had sent money. The usual result was an empty mail box and when he did send me ten or twenty dollars I'd buy cigarettes first.

I lived in a single room and shared a bath with another student. He was older, had the G.I.

Bill so he was way better off than me.

My favorite meal became a half can of baked beans warmed under the hot water tap in the sink. Campbells brand with pork. Weekends I'd visit my girlfriend Evelyn Soper in Massapequa and her mom would fix big meals that usually revolved around pot roast. Yum!

Needless to say I was fixated on food. The beans cost around fifteen cents a can so ten dollars went a long way. I was skinny.

**RICE & CHICKEN BACKS / WATERMELON** - When I transferred to the University of Miami I was able to live in the dorms for the first semester. I was funded by summer jobs. I laid sod for a landscaper in 1956 and worked for dad as a mechanics' helper in 1957.

In January 1957 I moved in with a schoolmate, Nick Keenan, who lived in an inherited house. I paid Nick ten dollars a week and we shared expenses. I finally realized that it was better to work and held down two important positions. I did odd jobs for Mrs. Oglisby who owned a nice apartment building in Coral Gables. Ten dollars for a Saturday's work paid the rent! I also lucked into a job with the Publicity Department of the City of Miami which paid two dollars and fifty cents an hour for about fifteen hours a week. I was doing pretty well I thought.

I moved out of Nick's house because his mom, sister and two kids needed a place to live so I spent over a year in a cheap efficiency apartment not far from school and pursued my degree from there. A trip to Sears and Roebuck netted me two Melmac plates, knives and forks, a couple of pots and a yen to cook something. There was no money for steak.

I had a hot plate and often prepared rice with chicken backs for dinner. Rice was very cheap and the chicken cost me ten cents a pound. One pot would last two days so I'd have money left over for cigarettes, breakfast and lunch. I walked a lot to save bus fare.

It was about two miles to the market. I carried the few things I bought in paper sacks because plastic shopping bags were not yet available. Two bags was my limit.

Once, at the store, I was overcome by a desire for watermelon. Melons were inexpensive and I got a good one and decided to splurge for a bus ride home rather than walk with the melon. That was a good idea but the bus didn't come. I got tired of sitting in the gathering dusk watching lucky citizens with cars drive past the bus bench and decided to walk to the next bench to pass the time. No bus. After a while I decided to walk another few blocks to pass the time, always looking over my shoulder to spot a bus. No bus came and I began to walk in earnest but the melon was heavy. I had to put my sack down every few hundred feet and switch the melon to the other side.

First I carried it in on my shoulder then in my arm like a baby. I tried everything I could including using both arms for the melon and resting the sack on top and holding the folded edge with my teeth.

Wow. Was I glad to get home!

I had trouble paying tuition and in September 1958 I got the axe from the U. of M. They wanted me to pay tuition in advance plus the sums I still owed from the last semester or I couldn't enroll. There was no other college in Dade or Broward County other than Barry College for Women.

By this time my mom had passed away and Dad having great difficulties. So my educational options were few. In today's world I would have been able to get student loans and my life would have been different, but maybe not better.

Rather than be drafted into the army I joined the Coast Guard Reserve and spent six months in initial active duty for training. November 12, 1958 through May 5, 1959. The best thing about the Coast Guard was that they planned three meals a day for us. Sigh!!!

**TIME OUT** - I have temporary possession of a book written by my mother's mother, Annie Conover. (Mrs. E. K. Conover is how she signs the book.) It is an amazing work with a great deal of content in its two-hundred and twenty pages. Just to list the variety indicates an engaged mind: poetry, recipes, motivational advise, jokes and cartoons, clippings, religious material, household tips and remedies, beautiful magazine clippings and philosophy. I feel that my mother's character was influenced by her mother's (Annie) mind set.

Several dates are found in her book. I believe that she worked on it between 1917 and 1955. She mentioned that her mother, who's name I don't know, was in her heyday in the 1840's. So in a sense the work connects three centuries of family life and is reaching into the future.

One thing galvanized me. She wrote out Longfellow's poem *The Arrow and the Song* in beautiful longhand script. I included this verse at the end of my Mom and Dad's chapter because I feel that my mother's love and good humor were like the song in the poem - they surfaced in my heart. What a coincidence!

Daisy and I met with John McNichol, a childhood chum from Martense street in Brooklyn.



This is where I was living just before going into the Coast Guard - in the apartment where I finally enjoyed that watermelon. This is how the apartment building looks on Goggle today - much better I think with new windows and great landscaping. The apartments inside have probably been renovated. When I lived here it was rundown. The owners. Mr. and Mrs. Einhorn, an elderly couple weren't able to do much landscaping or housekeeping. (My room was \$75.00/month or about \$17.30 per week) I left this building when I joined the Coast Guard.

We hadn't seen or talked in fifty eight years. As we sat with his girlfriend Barbara, I was moved to sing a song he taught me when I was ten or eleven years old - *Patty McGinty's Goat*. I remembered seven verses of the ditty. I know he was moved to find the song in the heart of a friend.

**Oh I just remembered this is the food section.** Here's a list of some favorite foods. Some recipes are included:

**Spare Ribs and Sauerkraut**

**Bryer's Ice Cream** (in 1946 we had to wait till mid-summer for peach. The ice cream was always hand-dipped.

**Beef Stew**

**Codfish Cakes** (The fish came in little boxes and the salt had to be rinsed out before you could form small hamburger-like cakes with a beaten egg in the cake to keep it together. Dip them in flour and fry 'em in Crisco.

**Fried Mashed Potatoes** (leftover spuds with an egg mixed in to keep it together. - small, hamburger-sized patties. Coat with flour before frying.)

**Fresh Peas with Salt, Pepper and Butter**

**Popovers** (I don't know how to make them - maybe there's a boxed mix now)

**Apple Pan Dowdy**

**Flaming Plum Pudding with Hard Sauce**

**1. Beef Stew.** Boil a couple of pounds of browned stew meat for about an hour and a half with a little salt and pepper and three bay leaves. You can dust the beef first with flour before browning if you wish. Toward the end add chunks of carrots, potatoes and celery. Add two cans of condensed Campbells Tomato Soup. Then add a couple of chunked onions. (big chunks please) If it needs thickening, pull a few cooked potato chunks out, mash them with a fork, and put them back. Cook until the beef's tender.

**2. Fresh Peas.** Shell a bunch of peas and boil them. Don't overcook them. Drain and butter and salt. If you can't find fresh, unshelled peas use frozen. Its fun to let kids shell peas.

**3. Apple Pan Dowdy.** Make a crumb topping by forking some flour, a buncha sugar and a cold stick of butter. The forking technique is important. You can use a knife and fork together and it'll easier to get a crumb like mixture. Use the edge of the fork. You don't want a dough-like mass. Spread the crumbs over a couple of cans of pie apples in a buttered pan. Stir some lemon juice and ground cinnamon into the apples if you want fancy. Bake 45 minutes or until the topping is browned. Be patient. Keep ice cream handy in case you burn your tongue.

**4. Heavenly Lemon Cream Pie.** 1<sup>1/2</sup> cups Crushed Vanilla Wafers, 1<sup>1/2</sup> cups Sugar, 9 T. Lemon Juice, 3 cups Heavy Cream , 6 Separated Eggs, and a <sup>1/4</sup> t. of salt.

- **Line** the bottom of an ungreased 9" spring pan with 1 cup of crushed vanilla wafers. In a small bowl dissolve sugar in lemon juice and stir well. **Whip** cream in a clean bowl. Reserve.

- **Beat** yolks a little with the salt in another bowl. Reserve. Beat egg whites until stiff but not dry. Fold yolks, Lemon Juice, Whipped Cream and Whipped Whites in a big bowl and pour into pan. Top with remaining crumbs,

- **Cover and Freeze.** Don't defrost. Unspring pan, cut and serve. It's beautiful and will serve sixteen.

**My favorite meal circa 2009 - Chopped Salad with Un Mil Isla dressing.** (Mix a little salsa and mayo together. Put it on a salad and stir. I sometimes call it sinko de mayo dressing) Then Garnish it pretty.

#### **5. Herb and Onion Bread (one loaf)**

**Ingredients:** • <sup>1/2</sup> cup milk • <sup>1/2</sup> cup warm water (100-110°F) • 2 <sup>1/4</sup> cup white or wheat flour • 1 <sup>1/2</sup> tbsp Sugar • <sup>1/2</sup> small Minced Onion • 1 t salt, • 1 t dried dill weed • 1 t crushed • dried rosemary. • 1 pkg. yeast.

Scald milk. Dissolve the Sugar and salt in it; cool to lukewarm. In a large bowl, dissolve the yeast in the warm water and let it foam. Add the milk, flour, minced onion, and herbs, and stir with a wooden spoon. When the batter is smooth, cover the bowl with a moist towel and let the dough rise in a warm place until triple in bulk - about 45 minutes. Stir down and beat vigorously for a few minutes, then turn into a greased 9 inch bread pan.

Let pan stand in a warm place about 10 minutes before putting it into a preheated, 350°F oven. Bake about 1 hour. Adjust proportions and ingredients after your enjoying first loaf.

**FREE TIP** - could be worth thousands if you ever get into the restaurant business. People will remember if you **give them great bread and salad.** The rest of the meal is important but the bread and salad rule must never be violated.

I gotta go on a diet soon.

Daisy and I finally bought a house in Waynesville, North Carolina. It was an old stone cottage when we started; a small, two bedroom, two bath love nest with a couple of bonus rooms and a carport. By the time we sold it to move to New Jersey in 2007, we had added a wonderful master bedroom suite, a comfortable dining room, and decks. We had a special hot tub deck just

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outside the master bath. It was our dream but increasingly more difficult to maintain due to my advancing age. We sold it before we had to and that was a good thing.

Our time in the Waynesville house was a good part of our lives. We worked hard, Daisy at the Harrah's Cherokee Casino and I on *Fun Things To Do In The Mountains*. We were blessed with frequent visits from family and friends. I worked from my home office.

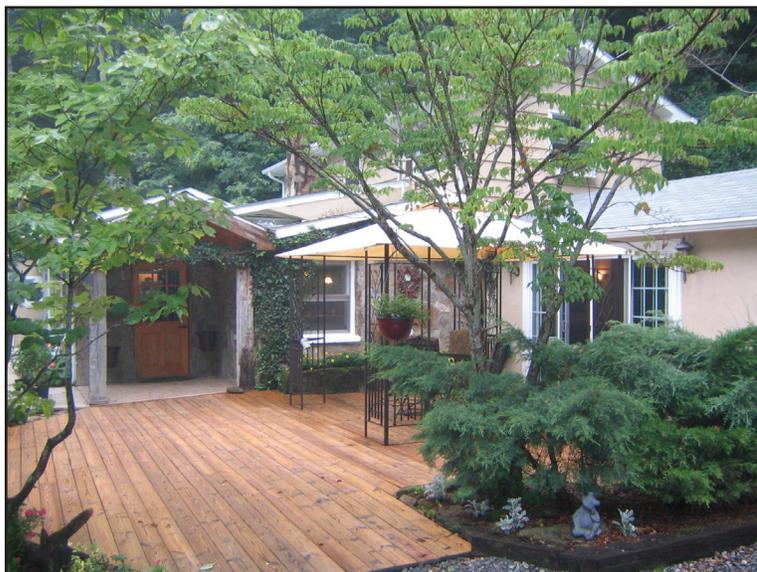
We needed no window treatments except in the upstairs bedroom that I used for naps. No houses were visible from our property unless you walked to the edge of our main deck and peered over. Then you could see the rooftops of two houses far below us. We were friendly with our near neighbors.

We could lie in bed and gaze at the stars and treetops. I saw that the one of the big exposed tie beams in our bedroom, high above the floor, was hung right over my legs. A gift from our friend Ed Knapp, who owned Vintage Beams and Timbers and authored the book *New Old Home* (Gibbs Smith 2002), they were a massive six by fourteen inches, hand hewn and harvested from a barn in Lima, Ohio. I hoped our contractor had them strongly fastened.

When I was sixty seven years old I was cleaning our bedroom fan from the top of an eight foot step ladder. The beams were just at eye level so I reached out and banged one with the side of my fist to see how strong it was. It was very sturdy, but I lost my balance and the ladder fell. I hung precariously from the beam yelling, "HELP! DAISY! HELLPPP!!!"

She came and I was saved. She raised and supported the ladder while I got back on board and climbed down. If I'd fallen on the edge of the ladder or on something else it could have been bad.

I was proud that I'd been working out on my Total Gym and was strong enough to hold on for the eternity it took for her to come into the house and help me. But I was forbidden to climb ladders. The clock was ticking.



Waynesville - We replaced a stone path and the front lawn with a wooden deck. It was better for our carpets and this third deck was good for entertaining.

### ALFREDO ALONSO - A ROMANCE

Daisy's dad, Alfredo Alonso, endured much in his lifetime. Born in Cuba in 1918 he was the youngest of five brothers and one sister. In 1937 he and his brothers sinned against the government and had to flee the island but not before he was arrested and tortured by the police.

His story involves a love affair that lasted over a half a century.

He spent time in NYC carousing with his brothers and, when the partying was done, he looked for work. He spoke little English but knew that the sign in a restaurant window meant that they were hiring a dishwasher. The restaurant owner, a woman, took him into the cellar and showed him the dish room where he'd be working and he agreed to be there in the morning to start work.

That night, to celebrate his new job, he got drunk with his brothers. That is the reason that he had a hangover the next morning when he showed up for work.

The boss lady showed Alfredo his work station, now covered with dirty dishes and greasy pots. It was a big mess. Alfredo's reaction was to toss his cookies all over the place.

Not an auspicious beginning but he was a good lad, determined to succeed. He worked there for years and learned about the restaurant business.

Away from Cuba he wrote his fiancée Carmen and his mom regularly. Alfredo sent his mom letters with photographs of himself and his brothers in the Streets and parks of NYC. One fateful day mama opened a letter from Alfredo while sitting at the kitchen table with Carmen.

Out popped a photo of Alfredo standing with his arm around the shoulders of a young woman. Carmen saw the photo, went ballistic and broke off the engagement.

Alfredo's protests that the woman in the photo was his brother's girlfriend made no difference. The engagement was over.

ORIGINAL  
TO BE GIVEN TO  
THE PERSON NATURALIZED

No. 7837828

Petition No. 21,073

Personal description of holder as of date of naturalization: Date of birth September 21, 1918 sex male  
complexion medium color of eyes brown color of hair brown height 5 feet 9 inches  
weight 145 pounds visible distinctive marks none  
Marital status married former nationality Cuba

I certify that the description above given is true, and that the photograph affixed hereto is a likeness of me.

Alfredo Alonso  
(Complete and true signature of holder)

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ss:  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

Be it known, that as a term of the District Court of the United States, Miami, Florida

held pursuant to law at Miami, Florida  
on November 21, 1958

ALFREDO ALONSO  
Miami Beach, Florida

then residing at Miami Beach, Florida

intends to reside permanently in the United States (when so required by the Naturalization Laws of the United States), had in all other respects complied with the applicable provisions of such naturalization laws, and was entitled to be admitted to citizenship, thereupon ordered that such person be and (she) was admitted as a citizen of the United States of America.

In testimony whereof the seal of the court is hereunto affixed this 21st day of November in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and fifty-eight and of our Independence the one hundred and eighty-third

JULIAN A. BLAKE  
Clerk of the U. S. District Court.

By *Chas. B. Chew* Deputy Clerk.

Was a violation of the U. S. Code and punishable as such, to copy, print, photograph, or otherwise illegally use this certificate.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

## Bill's Journey ~ Daisy and Bill

Alfredo eventually returned from the United States to live in Cuba again. He courted Caridad Riano, a beauty, married and, before they knew it, they were the parents of a baby girl they named Margarita Juliana.

Margarita has several meanings in Latin America. In Venezuela it means Pearl. In other places it is a refreshing tequila drink served in a salt-rimmed glass. In Cuba Margarita means daisy - the flower. Before long they called the baby Daisy. Yep. My girl. My sunshine. The light of my liver! Daisy!!!

Life was not easy for Alfredo and Carrie. Financial concerns led him to cross the water again to seek fortune in Miami. He became a partner in the Ambassador Cafeteria with Sonny Sussman and Walter Kaplan from 1948 through 1955. They served Cuban arroz con pollo on Sundays. Cuban food hadn't been done in the area before, so they enjoyed a degree of success. Alfredo managed and the other two were the money men.

Carrie worked there too, giving meal tickets at the front door. She was also teaching Spanish at the Berlitz language school.

Diners would get their tickets punched as they received their food and paid the bill before they sat to eat.

Meanwhile Daisy was somewhat in limbo. She moved to Miami Beach in 1952 at the age of nine to be with her parents and attend school. Her English was nil so she was adrift at school for a while. Like so many others she learned English with the help of television and neighborhood children. She did better in school as her English was perfected.

Daisy spent summers in Cuba with her grandparents until she was sixteen. She felt abandoned by her mother. It was during this period of shuttling back and forth to Cuba that Caridad and Alfredo split up and divorced.

Daisy was sixteen, in 1959, when Cuba blew up. She was on the last plane out and found herself in the United States for good.

Alfredo became a U. S. naturalized citizen in 1958. Meanwhile he fell in love with Elizabeth Tengberg who had been a counter girl at the Ambassador. She had moved on to other jobs and Alfredo moved on as well. He worked at the famous



I think it's the camera angle. I'm a big guy but not twice as big as Alfredo and Carmen put together. They were regular visitors to our home in Waynesville, North Carolina.

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Wolfies Restaurant for a year. Later he was a Maitre'D and waiter at the Biltmore Terrace Hotel. In 1960 he went to work at the Kennelworth hotel as a waiter. These were good paying jobs for the time but Alfredo's biggest claim to fame was working as Arthur Godfrey's personal waiter at the Kennelworth.

Daisy was outraged when her dad showed up one day with Elizabeth and her daughter Diane and announced that they were married and that Daisy would henceforth share her room with her stepsister.

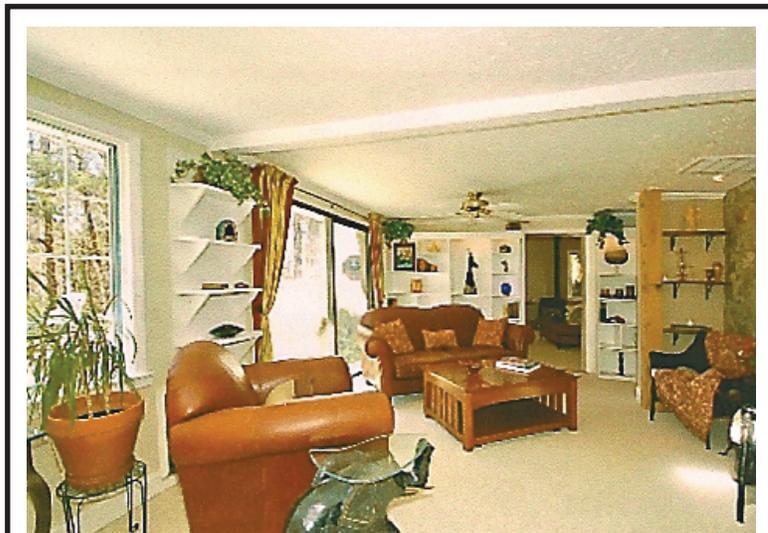
Daisy graduated from Saint Patrick's Catholic High School in Miami Beach. She married her sweetheart George Krutz, had two children; Kim and Scott. Scott, tragically, died when he was 18 months old. Daisy and George divorced. She married David Younes and had a third child, Kris, divorced and remarried Bill Serle.

Phew. That was hard to write in a few words. Remember this is the story of Alfredo's big romance.

Meanwhile - the world turned.

Caridad had her ups and downs. She came back to the United States with a lot of help from Daisy. She worked for Berlitz Language School at first and later for the Dade County Public Schools. She lived with Daisy and Bill towards the end of her life. She passed away in 1980 suffering from heart disease.

Alfredo and Elizabeth lived in the Miami area, ultimately retiring to live in the southwest section of Miami near Daisy and Bill. Daisy's parents and step-mom were all very supportive of Daisy and Bill and the grandchildren Kim and Kris,



The buyers of our house loved the furniture and decor so much that they bought the whole kit and kaboodle - even including the art work and television sets. This made it a lot easier for us to move to New Jersey. Note the white bookcases on either side of the bedroom suite doors. Alfredo, my father-in-law helped me make them when we had our first rented home in Miami. They moved with us quite a number of times but, here, they became "Built-ins."



We had a beautiful bedroom with fourteen foot high ceilings. Note that two of the tie beams are visible in this photo. We enjoyed the large spa-bath and walk-in closet - but my favorite feature was the hot tub just outside the bathroom door.

When we showed the house to a "Home Stager," to get advice prior to selling, she said we had the second nicest dining room she'd ever seen. I don't know where number one was, but it made me mighty happy to hear that.



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each in his or her own way. We were a loving family extended by Bill's parents, children Billy and Jeff, and Bill's sisters and brothers.

Diane, Daisy's stepsister didn't fit in Daisy's realm and was more absent than present, fighting her own life battles. I was her husband's best man when she married a troubled Viet Nam War vet. I filled in as a favor to Diane and paid for the wedding party as a gift. The marriage didn't work and later Diane married a postman named Art and faded from the scene.

Elizabeth developed lung cancer and passed away in 1987. By that time Daisy and I were married for over fourteen years. Alfredo was single and seventy years old.

There are a number of things I have observed about Miami's Cuban population. They are lovely, hardworking, passionate people adding greatly to America's stock of strong character and good morals. It seems to me, however, that their families were all wealthy in the old country. They all love to attend each others' funerals and they are good cooks and restaurateurs.

So Alfredo attended a number of funerals as he lived his life as an older widowed man. It was at a funeral that he got news of his fiancée Carmen. Word was that she had children, was now divorced and living in Havana. He got her address and wrote.

A number of love letters and phone calls later they decided to get engaged again. A year or so later, with the usual governmental interference, from Washington,



This is where we lived in 2009. Old Farm Village is a condo community surrounded by farms and far from any large town or city. It is a unique setting in many ways with miles of good biking lanes and nearby hiking trails. New Jersey at it's best.

We were not inside the gates but a part of a gated community called Panther Valley which provides social and sports opportunities. Stores and malls and Hackettstown are not too far. Best of all we are close to Kris and Dan and their kids. We enjoy seeing them often.

Although there is less room than we had in our Waynesville home, we used the space that we had. I enjoyed our "Library" which has ample side-by-side desks for me and Daisy and we enjoy and watching our high definition television over the fireplace in the living room from our twin leather recliners.



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Carmen actually arrived from Cuba and they finally got married!

By the time of Carmen's arrival, my son Billy was ready to marry his sweetheart Gail. Daisy and I were living in North Carolina at the time and made a journey to Miami with a dual mission. Meet and attend Carmen's wedding on a Saturday and Billy's on Sunday. 'Twas a memorable weekend in many ways.

So that's Alfredo's fifty-year-long love story. I was very proud of him. They visited us in Waynesville as often as possible and we loved having them. We relearned the game of Canasta sitting with them at our fireside table.

And the spinning world is going faster and faster. Suddenly our three years in New Jersey are over and we've bought a three bedroom-two bath house in Rockledge. April 9, 2011 was our first year anniversary in the house. It's been a busy year since we've been doing some remodeling and painting.



This watercolor study is based on a photo I took in Hackettstown, New Jersey