

## Awestruck and Remembrance

*By Hap Hansen*

We are now 18 years into the New Millennium. Things have changed dramatically over those years and the years that preceded. As I think about my earlier years, I recall being awestruck by the following historical events:

Walking into a larger town's high school as a freshman, after graduating grade school in a town of less than 100 people; being drafted at age 18 and learning that Sergeants could shout into your ear and chew you out with impunity because your 'Gig' line was not straight; firing a bazooka at an old World War One tank and watching the shell tear off some of its treads; watching my bride walk down the aisle in a white wedding gown. She was the most beautiful woman I had ever met; watching all three of my children receive Bachelor's Degrees and then Master's or Doctorate degrees; driving my wife's incredible artwork to distant cities, such as Omaha, Denver, Phoenix, Tucson and other major cities' art galleries; after being together for more than fifty years, watching my wife handle the devastating effects of Alzheimer's Disease with grace and dignity.

On a lighter note, I am somewhat awestruck by the things that were available when I was a youngster, but to my knowledge, no longer exist: Blackjack chewing gum; tiny wax Coke-shaped bottles containing sugar water; candy cigarettes; soda pop machines that dispensed bottles, not cans; coffee shops with jukeboxes at each table, where songs could be heard for a nickel or six for a quarter; home milk delivery in glass bottles with cardboard toppers that came off when the cream expanded, which drew every cat in the neighborhood; telephone party lines with six or seven families on each line and everyone knew all the neighborhood gossip; Warner Pathé News before the beginning of each movie; and where kids under age 13 paid 12 cents to watch Tarzan the Ape Man. If you go that far back in remembrances, you should also know about Butch Wax for those with crewcuts; telephone numbers with a word prefix, such as Olive-292. Do you remember Elizabeth Taylor in *Butterfield 8*? You probably owned a peashooter, watched Howdy Doody and played 45 RPM records.

You're getting way on in years if you played 78's or wound up the old Victrola. I remember our 'icebox' had metal trays with levers to free up the ice cubes, blue flashbulbs for shooting color film, and I was always losing my roller skate key. We went to drive-ins in Studebakers that looked pretty much the same whether going forwards or backwards, and we stowed a variety of things the 'cubby-hole,' which is now called the glove compartment.

I would be awestruck if all of us remembered all of those long-gone items from our memory box. If you do, you are mature beyond all words of description.