

Things I Would Change

By Hap Hansen

The first thing I would change is that I would never had started smoking cigarettes as a teenager. In those early days of my life, the most popular cigarettes were Lucky Strikes and Camels. The only cigarette with a filter was Kools, spelled with a 'K' and they were infused with menthol which just tasted awful! Lucky Strikes and Camels had no filter in which to lessen the nicotine. It has been more than 40 years since I last smoked a cigarette. I quit when a friend stopped by my office those many years ago and asked my secretary if I was in. She replied, "I know he is, I can hear him coughing." I heard her comment and quit on the spot! Today, I only smoke an occasional cigar and that is just my way of celebrating for quitting cigarettes!

Another change I would make would have been to stay in college and get a degree. I spent one or more semesters at Nebraska Wesleyan University, the University of Nebraska, York College and the Armed Forces Institute. My saving grace is that I continually talked to my three children when they were growing up about the importance of getting a college degree. All three of them have advanced college degrees and are doing well in the business world.

There are some things I would not change. I would not change giving up golf for more than five years to help care for my wife when she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. I have started playing golf again, on occasion, but unfortunately, at my age, I have difficulty hitting the ball farther than my shadow! I would not change moving to Windsor Gardens and becoming a member of the Writers Group and being involved with the Board and several Committees.

Finally, there are several additional things I would change if I had to live my life over. Unfortunately, some of them are so embarrassing I will not discuss them in public. If I ever were to talk about them with others, it would take an ingestion at a minimum of two Scotch and Waters! Change happens to all of us. Enjoy the ride!