

Is This as Good as It Gets?

By Hap Hansen

This column has some bad news and some good news. First, the bad.

In high school and early college, I had two best friends. We have communicated regularly since we left school. In the last few months, I could only talk to their wives, who informed me that their husbands were in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease and would not recognize me on the phone.

The other bad news? After almost 60 years of marriage, my best friend, my wife Carolyn, having suffered for almost six years, died from complications of Alzheimer's. She died on Valentine's Day over five years ago. For years, I gave her a bouquet of roses on Valentine's Day. On the note, I would always write: "There are only eleven roses, because you are the twelfth one."

I worry sometimes about that devastating disease. I am often forgetful, words do not come as easily as they used to and I seem to be more tired, more often than I used to be. About my tiredness, a few weeks ago, I was at my daughter's for dinner. I was complaining about my being tired a lot. I said that I might check out a new doctor, besides my regular doctor and heart doctor. My daughter said, "Dad, before you do that, why don't you check your birth certificate?" Now for the good news.

After her comment, it dawned on me! I am nearly 84 years old. I still do some writing. I still go for long walks. I still play a little golf. I still serve on a couple of HOA committees, I am a member of Optimists and serve on their Board. So I lead a fairly busy life. One of the writing projects I am working on is writing ridiculous and silly Haiku-type poetry using mostly clichés. Here's a couple of examples:

Measure twice, cut once.
But eternal optimists
Measure once, cut twice.

A work in progress.
Thinking outside of the box.
It's a game changer!

No ifs ands or buts.
Rubbing salt into the wound
Always hurts like Hell.

Change is in the wind.
Are the best years still ahead?
Only time will tell!

Finally, if I wrote a silly Haiku-type poem that I think now describes me, especially after my daughter's comments, it would be....

At my current age,

Is this as good as it gets?
Not by a long shot!