

## I Wish It Could Have Been 80

*By Hap Hansen*

When I was a child in the late 1930's, we were as the old cliché says, 'poor as church mice.' Many times I dreamed that my 'real parents' would show up and take me to their mansion, where I would be rich. Of course, it never happened. That was an unfinished dream then that I'm glad never occurred.

Over the years, I have had many dreams that were not only finished, they were fulfilled. A happy, but sometimes dreamy childhood; a good high school and college education; service to my country; a happy marriage; three marvelous children and seven equally marvelous grandchildren .

Certainly, there were unfulfilled dreams. Heart disease and stroke runs in my family. My father died at age 62, my mother at age 76. My oldest sister died of a stroke. All three of my older brothers had open heart surgery. Two are deceased. My younger brother has had a stroke.

And here I am, at age 80, fat, dumb and healthy. I wish the deceased members of my family could have lived out their last years in good health.

Some of my fulfilled dreams were often simple survival.

Years ago, when my wife, Carolyn, our children and I lived in Casper, Wyoming, in addition to my corporate administrative and personnel responsibilities, I was the company lobbyist. The Wyoming Legislature met in Cheyenne, Wyoming each year in January and February. I used to tell my friends that I went south for the winter!

I am blessed that all three of my children are college graduates and all three have Master's or Doctorate degrees. As a friend once said to me about my children, "Hap, you are like a good Appaloosa stallion. You weren't much yourself, but you sure threw a lot of color!"

My last unfulfilled dream. My wife died two years ago from complications of Alzheimer's disease. We were married for 56 years. I wish it could have been 80.