

The Pursuit of Hap

By Hap Hansen

I decided to change the wording of 'In Pursuit of Happiness' just a little. I call it, 'The Pursuit of Hap.'

When I was a little boy, there was pursuit by my Mom with a big stick because I had done something wrong. Usually a daily occurrence. As I began to participate in sports, I found myself being pursued while carrying a football by a 250 pound fat kid who incredibly, could run faster than me! A little older, I was pursued by the Draft Board to get me to register for the draft at age 18. Then I was pursued by the U.S. Army to get me into their ranks soon after age 18.

Not long after, I was frequently pursued by a Master Sergeant who needed someone to do KP. For those of you unfamiliar with Army terminology, KP means Kitchen Police. How one could be called Kitchen Police while peeling a 50 pound sack of potatoes is beyond me!

Out of the Armed Forces and into college. My turn to pursue. A Fraternity brother had introduced me to a girl, Carolyn, whom he knew in high school. A coffee date. One look at her and I was in pursuit! Unfortunately, she did not seem too interested. After several dates in pursuit, and what seemed like months, we sat down over dinner for some serious conversation. I pursued and presented her with an engagement ring with a diamond about the size of the head of a pin. I worked up the courage to ask her to marry me. After what seemed to be an interminable amount of time, she said, "Well, I can either accept the ring, or have you arrested for stalking!" She then accepted my proposal and my pursuit had paid off. At an engagement party at her Sorority, I drew her aside and asked if she would tell my friends that she had pursued Hap! She laughed and quietly said, "Do you want me to call the stalk cops?" We were married several months later. We have three marvelous children and seven equally marvelous grandchildren.

Carolyn died on Valentine's Day, 2014 from complications of Alzheimer's disease. We had been married 57 years. But I am now happy. My personal pursuit of a deeper appreciation of happiness and a better knowledge of understanding will continue without her. I know they will come. Perhaps tomorrow.