

Community Comment  
January 3, 2014  
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### A New Year Story

We all have a story. I saw a sign at Moonstone Crossing's wine tasting store in Trinidad that caught my attention. To Paraphrase, because I can't remember it exactly, it says to cut people some slack; some are living a story that we can't even imagine. My wife has been busy teaching ~~memmor~~ writing classes for HSU through the OLLIE program, offered at the ~~Aquatics Center in Eureka~~. The program is for those of us over fifty, ~~but the people interested seem to be older~~. The idea is to leave a legacy or a glimpse into some important part of their lives.

As I get older, I wish I knew more about my parents and grandparents. My dad died at 52 from lung cancer. I know he was orphaned by about age nine, started smoking young, got into a bit of trouble and was offered work in a logging camp in southern Oregon as part of the civilian Conservation Corps. As a first generation American from Omaha, this was quite an experience. He said it was life changing. When I graduated from Humboldt with a Forest Management degree in 1969, he came to my graduation. I took him on a road trip to Roseburg to look for anything that might look familiar. We didn't find much but he seemed to enjoy the trip anyway. My dad was completely deaf by this time so there was no chatting along the way. But he did tell me some of his memories from that time. ~~He told me a memoir~~. He died not too long after that and I was too young to appreciate his history. I think a lot of us share that problem. I would have liked to know more about his parents who died young in Omaha. I would have like to know any stories he may have heard about his grandparents who did not immigrate to America. ~~As all of my grandparents came from the same small village in Sicily, that is a trip I still need to make.~~

My story is linked ~~securely~~ to their story. As in any family, these stories both good and bad are our history. They have influenced who we are and what we believe. Their genetic make up ~~is~~ part of our genetic being. Their life adventures and triumphs and failures have influenced how we were raised and what values were modeled for us. Sharon has written her story about her life growing up on a farm in Michigan. It centers around her grandparents who immigrated through Canada. Her Grandfather was born and raised in London, England in 1863. ~~Her story is closely linked to their life story~~. She wants our children and grandchildren to know their history; their lineage. Without this story, much will be lost to the fog of time. She also took my Mother's story, written by my mother, did some editing, and with the addition of family photos like in her story, published a small book. These two books were Christmas gifts this year for our children and grandchildren and siblings in both families.

~~We all have many stories that make up our life~~. We opened a Christmas card and the note started with "I should have written you sooner". We both knew bad news was coming. An old friend of ours passed away this year. Some of you may remember him. When I was first elected to the council in Arcata in 1976, we had a city manager that I thought

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was extraordinary. His name was Roger Storey. He was a former Naval Officer and a true professional. His calm and steady hand helped me learn my job in a way that otherwise would not have been the same. He was a credit to Arcata and should be remembered fondly and we all should be grateful for the public service he provided. He will forever be part of Arcata's story. He is a big part of mine.

Happy New year. May this year bring health and prosperity to you and yours.

This has been Sam Pennisi for community comment.