

## Autobiography of Eileen Sever

From Your Grandmother

Based on the book: For my Grandchild.

My name: Originally, Elka Marlene Doner. B. 1935 in Winnipeg, Canada. Canada fought in World War 2 from 1939-1945. Having a German-sounding name was not patriotic, so i got renamed to Eileen Margaret Doner. When I married your grandfather, his name was Heinz Sluszewer. Everybody called him by his Hebrew name of Moshe. When you become a U.S. citizen, you can select any name you like. So when Opa got his citizenship he took the last name of Sever, which is a Hebrew name with Babylonian roots.

I was named for my maternal grandfather, Elimelech Zaslavsky. This was done by using the letter E for me.

I've never had a real nickname. When I was tiny, I was called Tsiplonik, which is Ukrainian for Chickie. My mother called me "Ei" for short. My father's sister, Kayla, who was my closest aunt, called me Elka, all her life.

I call you Quakie because you used to refer to yourself as "Quakelyn" when asked your name. The first name you assigned to yourself was "Kega" but you later switched to the above.

Besides your grandmother, I am mother, librarian, loyal friend, financial planner, hiker, selective traveler, condo manager, homeowner-I set up my own home at an advanced age. 12th Street was the first home that was ever mine-chosen, furnished, decorated all by myself I decided to create this book to communicate with you, and because I so wish that my grandmothers had left something like this for me.

My current favorites:

Reading-non-fiction history. Music-classical. Vacation spot-Santa Monica. My favorite time with friends is spent walking, talking, eating together, going together to plays and concerts. My goofing off consists of watching tv. I always used to stay fit by walking and hiking. I don't care for formal exercise programs. My all-time favorite movie is Cinema Paradiso, but you have to watch it clear to the end because it has a surprise ending.

My favorite foods are chocolate and any kind of fish or fish salad. I have a couple of collections: souvenir boxes from trips, and little bird and turtle sculptures. The birds are Inuit and Ojibwa. The turtles vary, but one is from Martinique and one is from India.

I have two social causes: fighting anti-semitism, and civil rights, left over from having seen Jim Crow laws in action when I first visited the United States in 1939. It was sickening.

My current life: I stopped working at 83 1/2. It was very hard for me, and if I hadn't gotten sick, I would be working still. I am trying to replace work by looking at all my books and old date books, decluttering, and working on family history.

Our Family:

My parents: Lillian Rachel Zaslavsky, b. 1905, Odessa, Ukraine.

Sol Sholem Doner, b. 1906, Winnipeg.

My grandparents: Esther Malka Weller, b. 1873'ish, Smorgon, Belarus.

Elimelech Zaslavsky, b. 1872'ish, Zaritsov, Poltava Province, Ukraine

Shaindl (aka Sonya, Sadie) Atrubin, b. 1877, Mikolaev, Ukraine

Elisha Moshe Doner, b. 1874, Melitopol, Ukraine

My great-grandparents: Rachel Yamran, b. 1834'ish, d. 1878, Smorgon, Belarus

Menachem Dovber Weiler (fam. Changed to Weller), Smorgon

Miriam Angelevich, b. 1850'ish, d. 1910, Poltava Province  
Levi-Yitzchak Zaslavsky, Zaritsov, Poltava Province

Chaya Sura Fagelman, b. 1845'ish, d. 1934

Nathan Atrubin, born Sifrinson, Vitebsk, Belarus

Malka (Mary) Ginsburg, b. 1851, d. 1923

Aron Wolf Doner, b.1848, d. 1926, Berdansk, Ukraine

All my grandparents and six of my great-grandparents are buried in Winnipeg at the Shaarei-Zedek Cemetery. Only the Weiler couple didn't live to make the trip.

My heritage:

My ancestors are all from the Russian Empire. They got there when Poland was overrun in the late 18th century and their part was annexed by Russia. They left for Canada because they didn't get a fair deal-squeezed economically, limited where they could live,

limits on educational opportunities, and social conditions worsening as their society went toward revolution. Many Ukrainian non-Jews came at the same time for the same reasons.

My four grandparents came to Canada as young marrieds with very young children. Six of my great-grandparents came also as middle-aged couples.

Jewelry and watchmaking, and fine-tailoring, were the trades on my mother's side of the family. Painting, carpentry, building trades and electrical work on my father's side. Everybody in Winnipeg had their own small business. In addition, there was often work to be had from the railroad, which was Winnipeg's big employer.

My mom and dad:

My parents (your great-grandparents) both grew up in Winnipeg. They married in 1933, during the Great Depression. My dad was a pharmacist. My mom was a bookkeeper who later worked with my dad in his business. The pharmacy, Doner Drugs, had a lunch counter and my mother developed "The Great 25-cent Hamburger" which sold so well that it helped get the whole extended family through the depression.

My parents were deeply in love. People who knew them often remarked on how wonderful it was to go into their store to witness the loving feelings which were exuded between my mom and dad. I heard this even decades later when I met people from Winnipeg and they identified my connection.

Everybody I knew in my youth worked very hard during the Depression and everybody I knew was afraid. All the immigrants especially were tense and fearful people. That atmosphere of fear and tension affected me greatly while I was growing up. In retrospect, it made me less of a parent than I might have been otherwise.

My Grandparents:

I adored my grandmothers. I was the only grandchild for my maternal grandmother's whole life and the only one for five years on the paternal side. My grandmas were devoted, loving, interested, and they always had time for me. They were a bit jealous of each other over me, and that made me a bit sad.

My mom was one of 4 kids. Until I was five years old, I lived in her mother's house along with my gran, my parents, and my mother's three unmarried siblings. In addition, to make ends meet, two other rooms were rented out to non-relatives. During the Depression, people became homeless overnight, so various relatives who found themselves in this situation also moved in temporarily, and there they were in the morning. All very exciting for a kid.

My gran died suddenly, the household broke up, and all my fun was over.

My father's mom lived with her unmarried daughter, my beloved Aunty Kayla. When I was two-and-a-half, my Aunty married and I got to be the flower girl at her wedding. That was great. I briefly blew it and started down the aisle declaring "I'm the bride", but I soon got control of myself and carried it off with success.

Both grandfathers were long dead by the time I was born.

Siblings:

I only ever had one sibling, your great aunt Marilyn. She was born when I was seven and-a-half. I still remember announcing her birth to all the neighbors by knocking on their doors very early on a Saturday morning.

Over the years, I have had close friendships with a number of cousins who were closer to my own age. They were sort of substitute siblings.

I did a lot of baby-sitting with my sister. We had our best times creating activities and singing together when our folks were out. In California, my sister never had the experience of extended family. Our dad had poor health after age 40, so she barely had a dad.

More about family:

Nobody is particularly famous. The family has produced numerous teachers and professors. One of my dad's cousins, David Pall, worked on the Manhattan Project and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. One sister of my paternal grandfather remained in Ukraine when the rest of the family came to Canada. One of her great-grandsons, Lev Mirimsky, served in the Ukrainian Parliament, for Crimea.

There have been many eccentrics, all on my mother's side: Head standers. Dietary faddists, men who shot guns into the air, and lots of general screaming. This same side of the family has also produced some wonderful musicians and talented artists and inventors. I was the best storyteller for a long time, but now your mother is.

My mother always said that I was most like her father (after whom I was named).

When I was a little girl:

I lived first in my grandmother's house, which was a house you were in. You, your mother and I, went to see it. For me. It was the first time back since I was five. Inside it looked so much smaller than in my memory. We photographed you in my old bathtub which had claw feet. The house has since been demolished.

We then lived in a small bungalow where my sister was born. This was where I had my victory garden and where the block warden came by to see that we had our air raid curtains drawn.

We moved to California just after the war and lived in a small tract house in the Crenshaw District. There were lots of young children on the block, which was a lucky thing for my sister. At first, we were very short of money, so our den and one bedroom were rented out. Believe it or not, the house had only one bathroom. That's the way people lived in the forties and fifties. Most families I knew didn't start to get ahead until the wives started to work part-time in the late fifties.

Family life:

My parents were not strict as long as my sister and I showed good sense. We were basically good kids-didn't shoplift or take drugs, so we weren't closely supervised. Every naughty thing my sister did, I was told that she had learned from me. I didn't appreciate that, and ultimately concluded that my parents were poorly informed. I never found any reason to change that opinion.

Family vacations were car trips. We drove to Winnipeg twice, once in 1948 and once in 1952. 1948 was before the Interstate, and we drove all the way on 2-lane roads with a passing lane. I loved both trips because we saw lots of the U.S. and I got to revisit everybody in Winnipeg.

In Los Angeles, our "trips" were to see relatives in the area: Cathedral City, Perris, and around Los Angeles. All of these adult relatives were very wound up in themselves and had zero interest in growing children. My sister describes them as "The Depressives".

School:

I found kindergarten very regimented. When the teacher sat down at the piano and we had to get up and march, I finally could not force myself any longer. I ran out to the main bathroom, bolted the door on the inside, and refused to come out. The school had to get my mother to come and talk me into unbolting the door. My condition was that I never had to return to kindergarten. My parents had paid for kindergarten and the school didn't want to refund the money, so the compromise was that I could sit in the back of the first-grade classroom with crayons and paper. I loved that. I learned to read in no time and that was why I was always a year ahead in school.

My favorite part of elementary school was the last 20 minutes, when the teacher read a story or a book chapter. Otherwise school after first grade was dull and confining. I was dyslexic and suffered from a motor-planning deficit. Plus I was the youngest and the smallest in my class. All of this made me anxious and afraid of getting things wrong, and to some extent I was bullied. Despite all these setbacks, I managed to excel in basic subjects and was always commended by my teachers for "trying very hard".

Outside school:

I went to various after-school Jewish programs on and off. That was my only outside activity besides sandlot baseball in good weather. This was excellent socially, but I didn't learn very much.

My favorite books were Nancy Drew mysteries. Favorite comic: Archie.

There was no TV until I was in high school. We listened to the radio. My favorite show was Jack Armstrong, All-American Boy.

Our best holiday tradition was Shabbat dinner when my grandmother and later my mother lit candles. In California, we gradually got away from that.

My favorite Halloween costume was a harem girl with baggy pants that my mother had made for herself, and then I used it several times.

The first world event that I was aware of was the Spanish Civil War. Several young men from Winnipeg went to fight in the International Brigade, and one of my Uncles was involved in collecting money to send over. Once he let me pull a ticket out of a fishbowl for somebody to win a raffle prize as part of one of these fundraisers. I was three and that was very exciting.

The first president I remember was FDR. Our Prime Minister was Mackenzie King, and our King was George VI.

My only celebrity crush was on Leonard Bernstein. I didn't know then that he was short, acne-scarred and gay. When my sister came along, her crush was on Zubin Mehta. She had better taste than I.

My daydream from an early age was to grow up, have a job, and get away from home.

When I was a teenager, young woman, high school:

I was at Dorsey High in the Crenshaw District of Los Angeles. I loved it. We were a class of 165 and everyone was friendly. There was no bullying and no ganging up. Everyone was respected as an equal, including a severely disabled classmate with cerebral palsy. Junior High had been essentially all Caucasian. High School was one-third Asian, one-third African-American, and one-third Caucasian-the latter ranging from very affluent to lower middle class families. Two of the African-American students later served in the U.S. Congress: Diane Watson and Julian Dixon.

I belonged to several campus clubs and was even President of the World Affairs Forum. I even managed an athletic letter in Volleyball. I assure you that this was for participation rather than skill.

I wasn't particularly gifted in any academic area, but when we had Music Appreciation and Art Appreciation, I really came to life and soon branched out on my own to learn more. I began visiting free museums, galleries, and concerts. In my senior year, I found my way into ushering, which I continued for years, working at the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Hollywood Bowl, Wilshire Ebell and Biltmore Theaters-the latter initiating my interest in live theater. I soon had a large life outside school. I continued ushering through

junior college and through my working years, right up until I went to UCLA. During the annual opera season which was then three weeks long, I ushered every night and saw every opera. Ushering was my first exposure to culture and sophistication, and it was divine.

#### Fashions and hairstyles:

I never had a budget for clothes and was never good at doing my own hair. My mother was very unaware of style and hair-dos, so she was in no position to counsel me. I never thought of myself as physically attractive so none of it ever bothered me.

#### Social life and dating:

I found dating very stressful, but it didn't matter because my dates were very infrequent. I had no skill in swimming, biking, or any social sport and I wasn't a very good dancer. None of this helped. My parents pushed me to "find someone" so I was glad, a few years later, to meet Grandpa, who was already 30 and ready to marry. So we did. I was 21.

#### Music listened to:

Classical only. I heard many concerts as an usher. In order to qualify, I had to work at many rock concerts where everybody was high on drugs and absolutely raucous. Sociologically, the rock concerts were a much greater experience especially the one where a big guy picked me up and carried me down the aisle and said "point out my seat".

#### Car:

My first car cost \$25. It had a stick shift and there was no way I could figure out how to drive it. So I sold it to a guy who neglected to change the registration, and proceeded to use it in a fairly substantial robbery. This brought the police to my door, but we got it sorted out and I wasn't charged.

#### College:

I attended Los Angeles City College for 2 years with a major called "Legal Secretarial". I worked part time and I was commuting by bus, so there was no time for social activities. Since I didn't drive, I walked a lot. I believe that all that walking contributed to my good health later in life.

I then worked full-time for 2 years, saved my money, and went to UCLA. The best thing about UCLA was the other students. The academic set-up was too impersonal and too competitive for me. Plus I wasn't academically prepared. I searched for and found the easiest major-Sociology-and eventually got my B.A. after I was already married.

#### Social and political causes:

I first visited the United States in 1939 and saw Jim Crow in action. It was appalling to see adults pushed around and humiliated by other adults. It violated my sense of justice.

California was much better, but a fair deal for African-Americans remained as something I was committed to.

In College, I met Israelis and American Zionists, and I began to take a real interest in Israel and Middle East affairs. Additionally, I have always been committed to confronting anti-Semitism.

Jobs and career:

My first job (part-time in Junior College), was at an advertising agency which did political campaigns among other things. I learned about altering photographs, quoting out of context, and innuendo. My agency had run a very dirty campaign against Helen Gahagan Douglas when she ran for Senate against Richard Nixon, and they were still bragging about it years later.

I did layouts and general stenography. After that came the boring accident lawyers for two years.

The most bizarre part of office work in the Fifties was that the older male employees were constantly pawing at the "girls", and the younger guys teased us constantly. We were taught to just laugh it off and carry on.

When I married and went to Israel, I started teaching English Language to elementary and middle school students. I took Education courses at night and also French classes to enable me to communicate with the Middle Eastern folks who were then pouring into Israel.

When I got back to the U.S. (to save my Citizenship) I got the idea to go back to LACC to study something serious. I studied Computer Science and Math and did okay for a while. Then the material got too hard for me. By then, several people had suggested Library work, and I branched out into a pre-Library program. It involved exploring a broad cultural background, which was just what I loved. The math came in handy, too, because Libraries were then automating.

Once I got to UCLA Library School, I knew that was for me. I graduated at age 30 and worked in the field for over 50 years.

Your grandfather:

I met your grandfather on a blind date. We went to the Crest Theatre on Westwood Blvd., near your former apartment on Wilkins, and saw a wonderful film called "Tea and Sympathy". The theater is currently being re-named for Leonard Nimoy of Star Trek.

Grandpa and I always enjoyed each other's company and had lots to talk about. Grandpa was also very tall, good-looking, and well-mannered. My parents totally fell in love with him.



Grandpa proposed in his car, parked under a tree on Redondo Blvd. We had a very brief engagement because his student visa was running out and we had to marry quickly to keep him legally in the country.

Your grandfather was Moshe Sever, aka Mike. His parents were Curt Sluszewer (b.1894) and Kathe Pulvermacher (b. 1900) in Germany. His only sibling was Ernst (Yosi), who was a year-and-a-half older, and was killed in the Israeli War of Liberation.

Grandpa lived in Germany until age 6. Then the family moved to Palestine. He graduated from a secondary agricultural school (Ben Shemen), farmed for a while, and then came to the U.S. for college and adventure.

Our wedding:

We had two weddings: a quickie in Las Vegas on March 26, 1957 to meet the immigration requirements and later, our Temple wedding. The latter was at Temple Beth Zion on Olympic Blvd. There were 60 guests-family and friends. I wore a nifty, white, only slightly used designer dress. One of my college friends, Mimi Feldman, (from whom I had also bought the dress), sang "Set Me as a Seal upon your Heart". It was beautiful. In typical dyslectic fashion, I led the Recessional down the wrong aisle. Everything else was perfect.

Our honeymoon was in Europe. We went to London, Paris, and Rome. Trouble was, I was pregnant with my first child, and I was either ill or violently ill the entire time.

In retrospect, I was much too immature to have any real value from the travel, even if I hadn't been so sick.

Becoming a mom to your parent:

Grandpa and I had wanted a second child for a long time. We were very excited to add your future mom to our family.

Even in the delivery room, your mother was exceptional. She lifted her head and looked all around her. She has always been more alert and quick-witted than anybody else. She made us very happy, but she also talked very fast and non-stop starting at an early age. That sometimes made us crazy. Your mom also had lots of ailments as a kid. That also impacted our lives.

As a teen, your mom was a good kid. No drugs, no staying away without notification, no crime except for shoplifting-which you already know about.

Grandpa and I were always sure that Anita would be in sales. It was her destiny.

I loved being a mom to your mom. She was bright and adorable and warm-hearted. Tough was that she was sick a lot. It seemed like she caught every infection that passed through the room.

You don't remind me of your mom in the slightest. Coming along, you looked a lot like her, but that stopped by your twenties.

You are much more academic and intellectual. You are much more focused and career-oriented.

I'm enormously proud of your mom. First of all, she completely and single-handedly saved my life in 2021, when I was in the hospital. She's loyal, giving, hard-working, and sincere. She functions in the face of adversity better than anyone I've ever seen.

When you were born:

How I learned you were on your way: Your mom called me from the gynecologist's office. This was the same m.d. Who had delivered her. I was the first person to know.

Reaction: I was quite happy at the prospect of becoming a grandparent.

How we first met: I was in the delivery room with Kate. Grandpa said to call him when there was no more blood. I got to hold you right away and I remember how warm and cozy it felt. I knew I would love you. You had very long eyelashes and you sort of resembled your mom. She remembered that I said to you, "It's a cold, cruel world but we're in it together".

I knew I would like being a grandmother. It made me feel as if I had a purpose in life. There's no downside to it.

## HOLIDAYS.

We don't have a lot of family traditions, but we always had apples and honey for Rosh Hashana.

We don't particularly decorate. When Kate came into the family, she always did beautiful Christmas decorations including tree ornaments and the snow village.

We always ate Sever Spaghetti, a foolproof recipe perfected by my mother.

## FIRSTS.

Kiss: Dan Weissburd was one of the best-looking and popular boys in school. He later became a TV actor. I think his goal was to kiss every girl in school, and one day it got to be my turn. It was definitely pleasant. 10th Grade.

Pet: Ringey, the German Shepherd, when I was five. He got in trouble biting the postman, so I couldn't keep him. I've only just now gotten over it by having Michie.

Trip on my own: When I was 19, I went alone to Mexico City. After 4 years of High School Spanish, I thought I would be able to talk to the people. Got there, couldn't understand one word, and could barely blurt out a couple of important sentences, like "Don't touch my luggage". Amazingly, I had a good time anyway. I met a darling local guy on the plane, he planted cigarettes on me (didn't know it), and I took them through customs. He was waiting for me outside the terminal. He later sold the cigarettes and on the profits, he really took me around Mexico City. He was a grad. Student in Engineering at Mexico Polytechnic.

Lived on my own: Between 18 and 20, I rented a room in a miserable, cold house with a sink for laundry, no machine. I was not comfortable there, but I did learn a lot about getting by on my own. It was actually a poor use of my time, but it seemed like a good idea.

Presidential Candidate: My first presidential vote was cast for Adlai Stevenson, whom I loved. In retrospect, he was a poor candidate, but all the college crowd adored him.

#### FAVORITES.

Place I've lived: Santa Monica.

Fashion breakthrough: Clothes and personal style have become very casual. White gloves and little hats were common when I first went to work at age 17.

Times spent with my children: Before age 5. I loved watching my babies become toddlers, learn to walk and talk, and I loved finding activities to do with them. Once they went to kindergarten, that was all over, and everything became about the outside world.

Times spent with you: I love every minute I've spent with you. One favorite memory is when we used to take wonderful, morning adventure walks before I took you to day care. We used to look for puddles and kitty cats, which were your two favorites. One morning, you wanted to thank me, but you didn't talk yet. You bent down and picked up a pretty rock and gave it to me. Of course, I still have it.

Places I've travelled to: Norway for the scenic beauty, Ireland for the people, Turkey for the antiquities, India for the other-worldliness and the fairy-tale quality, Italy for the history, and France for the culture. I like repeats. I've been to Italy 9 times.

Jobs I've had: Central Library History Department.

Causes I've volunteered for: I wonder if you remember when I was the volunteer Librarian for your class at Westwood Charter. I met your class once a week, to help everybody find a book and check it out. Once I heard you say to another kid: "My grandma's a real Librarian, but now she's attired."

Other volunteering: I was co-leader for your mother's Brownie troupe. For years, I was a walking tour docent for the Los Angeles Conservancy, specializing in downtown L.A.

Quotes from me: 1. People are never at a loss when speaking about themselves and their own lives. Knowing this solves all social awkwardness because you can always engage others in conversation on this basis.

2. Men's greatest concern is the admiration of other men. When somebody told me this, it was a revelation which has made the rest of my life easier. Don't fight it.

### MOST IMPORTANT.

Political or religious leaders: I love the U.S. Founding Fathers for all time. I'm also very impressed with Israel's founders.

Social movements: The sixties when the daily life of this country really changed. Clothes, language, behavior-everything loosened up. That was a good thing. But the downside was that there were no longer any standards that everybody observed.

Inventions and discoveries: Television and antibiotics. Computers, the internet and smart phones.

Role models: I've picked and chosen ideas from a number of people. My main mentor has been Miriam Aarons, whom I met at work. Another was my cousin Laurie Aron whose daughter and granddaughters you know.

Sources of strength and support in my life: My mother and a few close friends. My mother was very inconsistent in her behavior, but basically she was on my side. Piece of advice: Read this memoir carefully. It's full of wisdom.

### BIGGEST.

Adventure I've had: Living in Israel, which I did for 5 years, before it was such a modern place. It was like going back in time, not to speak of meeting people who had come from all over the world.

Adventure I'd still like to have: To see you graduate from law school.

Risk I've taken: Changing jobs and homes even when I couldn't afford it, but I felt I had to try.

World event in my lifetime where I remember where it was when I learned of it: Well, there were many such events: Visit of the King and Queen in Winnipeg. Britain declaring War on Germany. Pearl Harbor. Death of FDR. VE day. Outbreak of the Korean War. JFK assassination. Robert Kennedy assassination. 9/11. New century. Death of Princess Diana.

Lessons I've learned: Not to be negative or dismissive about any opinion that anyone states. For years, that was the only way I knew to respond. It was a very bad habit.  
Accomplishment: To get where I am intellectually, socially, and financially when everything mitigated against it.

#### PERSON WHO.

I looked up to most as a girl: My mother's cousin Freda who was a nurse, very pretty and had a handsome husband. I might note here that two of my jr. high buddies became world famous: Joyce Trissler, who starred with the Alvin Ailey Dance Company and Dora DeLarios, who was a world-class ceramic artist. My sister has many of her pieces. The three of us ate lunch together on the same bench for at least one whole school year. I looked up to both of them, because their talents were already evident.

I admire most now: Ruth Bader Ginsberg, David McCullough, and currently Liz Cheney.

I've learned the most from: Herman Stromer and Curt Freymann, my two serious male companions. They both saw I needed help at two different times of my life. They both took a paternal interest, made solid suggestions, lent a helping hand, and straightened out many aspects of my thinking. They both really cared.

#### LOOKING BACK NOW.

The things I've found most important in life: Personal relationships with family and friends. Just a few choice ones are enough. The players may change over time, and that's okay. Satisfaction in your work is a close second.

Things people tend to make a big deal about that really aren't important at all: Money. It's important to have a balanced view of money. Work out a general budget, make a savings plan, then relax. Don't stew about every dollar and don't skimp to save paltry sums.

Values I cherish: Honesty. Social conscience. Loyalty.

Principles that guide me: Emphasize fully experiencing life rather than focusing on acquisitions. This includes structuring a rich employment life also. What really doesn't matter is what kind of car you drive or how fancy a house you live in, as long as you are comfortable.

Words to live by: These are from your grandfather: If it can be solved by money, it's not a problem.

Experiences I hope you will have: Love of partners and children. Feeling of accomplishment in the larger world.

Tradition I would like to pass on to you: Keeping in touch with members of the extended family. My life is much richer because of my friendships with extended family members.

Never: Take people and relationships for granted. And never worry about what it costs to park the car, for example. In retrospect it pales.

Always: Cherish the positive and good things in your life and don't over-concentrate on the negative. Remember that your best is all you can do, so don't withhold your best efforts. That being said, always hold back a little something of yourself for yourself, with the exception of when you have very young children.

It's a bit premature, but advice for retirement is that service to other people is the most important goal. Can take any form.

#### ADDITIONAL WORDS OF WISDOM.

Believe that you can make a difference-even a small difference.

"Brighten the corner where you are". It's an old hymn, but good advice.

Don't let anger rob you of anything of value. Sometimes a vigorous walk and very deep breathing will relieve that negative energy.

#### WHAT CONSTITUTES A GOOD MARRIAGE;

1. Share the moments.
2. Bounce off the ideas.
3. Nobody feels denied.
4. No problems are ever just the fault of one person. Blame casting is not useful.

#### WHAT ELSE I WANT TO SHARE.

The interesting thing about my life is that in addition to experiencing much myself, I have known personally many people who have been eyewitnesses to history. Add to that, the family members who have left diaries, and I feel that I am informed from the late 18th century up to today.

1. My great-grandfather Doner reported that when his grandmother was a youngster, (late 18th century), her sister-in-law had the job of going outside their house to the woodpile to bring in wood for the morning fire. One morning, she found the body of a dead baby lying among the logs. She thought fast, wrapped the body in her shawl, and brought it into the house with the wood. The family caucused and decided to burn the body. They had barely finished when Cossacks were pounding on the door demanding "the missing child they had

kidnapped to use its blood for matzos". The Cossacks turned the house upside down to no avail and left in frustration. A neighboring family was not so fortunate. When the next body was planted on them, they were all killed.

2. The same great-grandfather remembered the Crimean War and the cannon fire in the harbor of the town where he was a little boy.

3. My grandparents were immigrants in Canada, and later in Israel, I encountered hundreds more immigrants. So I feel that I have really observed the immigrant experience.

4. And World War 2 was an experience in which I really participated. Everybody was involved, everybody got behind the war effort, and there was a wonderful spirit of unity and hope. Everybody did something for the war effort, be it plant a victory garden, collect scrap metal, knit blankets and socks, volunteer to check blackout curtains at night. Canada was in for almost 6 full years. From the time that my dad's cousin Jack Donner went overseas with the RCAF, we sent a weekly package to him in England with cigarettes, magazines, and anything he said he needed. The cigarettes could be traded as well as smoked and were highly important for morale.

On the home front in Canada, there was no gasoline. Only physicians who made house calls could drive. So any delivery service like bread and milk, was done by horse and wagon. In the middle of town were horse stables, and streets and alleys were dotted with patties of horse excrement. Where you have horse patties, you have large numbers of birds picking out the undigested bits. It was like a scene out of the 19th century.

#### PEOPLE I MET ALONG THE WAY.

Veterans of World War I (including your great-grandfather), of World War 2, the Korean War, and later of the Israeli War of Independence (including your grandfather). I always asked questions and got many first hand accounts.

The first refugees from Communist China in the late 1940's. These were my classmates.

At City College, I met many young men who were survivors of Concentration camps. I even dated one for a time.

At UCLA, I met and spoke to Alexander Kerenski (who had been the first leader of the Russian Revolution). He visited campus, and I managed to engage him in quite a personal chat about the future of the Soviet Union. This was in 1957, and he completely

predicted the collapse of 1990. This fact really impressed my Russian cousins whom I discovered only in 2018.

In Israel, I met cousins who had left Russia in 1938 and who were members of Chassidel Chabad. I really loved them, and I was able to introduce Grandpa to a side of Israel that he had never known. I was very proud of that.

In Israel, I also met many people who had lived through the Stalin era in Eastern Europe and had blood-chilling tales to tell.

Back in California, I met many Persian refugees (1979), many of whom were members of a resistance movement centering on Radio Free Iran, which broadcast from here, but got nowhere.

In Santa Monica, in a French class, I met a survivor of the 1944 Warsaw uprising (not the ghetto one) and she told me all about it.

I cant say that I haven't had an interesting life.

Elvis connection: Everybody in my own and the next generation has an Elvis connection. Mine are as follows:

My German teacher, Ursula Fox, was personal translator to Elvis when he was in the Army in Germany.

Elvis' daughter, Lisa Marie, attended the Apple School, a Scientology school which was right down the street from Palms-Rancho Library. She was a member of our reading group, and came in every week with her class. Her favorite book was "Up in Seth's Room".

When I went to Graceland, we were divided into small tour groups. The man behind me looked very familiar to me. I kept telling my travel buddy that I knew the guy from somewhere, and it was killing me not to remember. I decided to ask him when mybuddy, Jan, turned around and looked and started laughing. It was Rod Stewart.

Other wisdom: An excellent conversational gambit-What would it take? An excellent riposte to put-downs-a kind person wouldn't have said that.

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E. Sever. Data for 15-yr. pin. Choose what you will.

I started with LAPL in 1970 as SCAN substitute and progressed to running a model intertype Library network called INFO. After a half-time stint as YA in Brentwood, and then Reference Librarian in Central Library, (several departments), I became Senior in Business and Economics. In 1979, I transferred to Palms-Rancho as Senior and have been there ever since.

I take great pride in the level of service and customer satisfaction we have achieved at Palms-Rancho. We were targeted by the CAO for high productivity, and have had numerous compliments and much circulation from our varied and interesting collection. Much of our collection has been built on gifts from our very intellectual and very multi-ethnic community.

I have always been proud of being a Librarian and I was very touched when a large number of my fellow Librarians volunteered to give blood when my husband had his two bypass surgeries.

I have two adult daughters, one is a supervising Pharmacist at UCLA Hospital, and the second is a Teacher's Aide, studying for her Teaching Credential.

I am an inveterate volunteer. I serve on an Alumni Scholarship Committee at UCLA, I give historical walking tours around Los Angeles, and I work with Chamber Music in Historic Sites, currently doing outreach to inner city children.

I love to travel in the U.S. and Canada and my latest travel adventure was a birdwatch in the Arctic, watching migratory birds do their thing.