



Dear Family and Friends,

It is time once again for the Christmas letter, the 52nd year, more than one-half century of family history and the milestone of my 70th birthday, December 16th. *You're Only Old Once: A Book for Obsolete Children* by Dr. Seuss chronologies an elderly man on a visit to the Golden Years Clinic, where he endures long waits and bizarre medical tests.— "Is this a children's book? Well...not immediately. You buy a copy for your child now, and you give it to him on his 70th birthday."

45th President Elect, Donald Trump said, "We showed America the silent majority is no longer silent. Today, we created an America that WINS again. Today, we made our hopes, our dreams – our limitless potential – a reality. Today, we made history. Today, we created a government that is once again of, by and for the people. Thank you, America. I will not let you down. I will always be your voice. I will always be your champion. Now it's time to get to work – to unite, to prosper, to become stronger. Together, I have no doubt we have taken the first step to Make America Great Again!"

It is past time that America lives up to her full potential, and once again is a force to be reckoned with. Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto is purported to have said, "I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve," regarding the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor by forces of Imperial Japan. I hope that same resolve is once again awakened in all Americans.

WHEW! A century has flow by with the most mind-boggling technological advances, and we are 17 years into a new one.

On March 10, 1876, Alexander Graham Bell succeeded in getting his telephone to work, using a liquid transmitter. When Bell spoke the famous sentence, "Mr. Watson—Come here—I want to see you," Thomas Watson, listening at the receiving end in an adjoining room, heard the words clearly.

From Bell's primitive first telephone to cellular phones, we now have the information highway right at our fingertips, quite literally. World Book Encyclopedia has been supplanted by the Worldwide Web. If you want to know something, just Google it.

I have oft heard this story. My granddaddy, W.C. Clayton was bedfast for 16 years before his death August 28, 1940. He read the Bible daily and became somewhat of a Bible scholar. His children thought the neighbors would think he was crazy because he predicted that man would one day shoot for the moon. Not only did we shoot for, but the crew of Apollo 11 landed and left footprints in moon dust.

Russian Yuri Gagarin, was the first human to journey into outer space, when his Sputnik 1 spaceship became the first artificial Earth satellite on 04 October 1957. The 58 cm diameter polished metal sphere was visible all around the Earth and its radio pulses were detectable. This surprise success precipitated the American Sputnik crisis and triggered the Space Race, a part of the larger Cold War.

Mom, my kids and I were between Ralls and Floydada, July 20, 1969 when Apollo 11 lunar module landed at 5:18 p.m. CDT, only 30 seconds of fuel remaining. Neil Armstrong radioed, "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." Armstrong became the first person to step onto the lunar surface six hours later, proclaiming, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

I was getting bored with retirement so I decided to check out Runningwater Draw RSVP, a federally legislated grant program organized in Plainview in 1973. RSVP provides volunteer opportunities for persons 55 years of age and older who reside in Floyd, Hale, and Lamb counties. Critical community needs are met through the efforts of the volunteers in such areas as senior citizen centers, hospital auxiliaries, Meals on Wheels, nursing homes, churches, schools, veteran projects, Keep Plainview Beautiful, Breakfast with Santa and My Dad Reads to Me. Little did I know, I would be offered a job. It has been a good supplement to my Social Security and has allowed me to do one of the things I love most, computer graphics. We print a bimonthly newsletter, sponsor monthly birthdays, annual banquet, Lunch Bunch, Christmas open house and Breakfast with Santa.

August 19, 2016, my life-long friend and ex-husband, Richard succumbed to COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) as a result of years of smoking and continued smoking after diagnosis. He was always good to me. Richard knew I love chocolate covered cherries and always bought them for me. This poignant memory brought tears to my eyes. I miss him. The last month was up and down. He had been in a nursing home, but wanted to come home, but by the next day, it was obvious that he was unable to care for himself and by the afternoon the COPD had exacerbated to the point of taking him to the ER. He was intubated and airlifted to Lubbock. I watched as the helicopter disappeared into the starry night sky, knowing that would be the last time I saw him alive. On the 18th, he had gotten so much better that they were going to discharge him, the next day. The hospital called me just after midnight that he had passed. He did not care too much about the idea of being buried and always said, "Just put me in a garbage bag and throw me in a ditch." We did the next best thing.

Richard's Last Ride by Twyla Woodring Aug. 2016

It's Richard's last ride
In a small black box at my side
He's all too soon gone
It's time to take him home
In a black Tahoe hearse
To become one with the Universe

At Springlake Cemetery
Scattering his ashes
As raindrops splashes
Among Claytons, long-since to rest laid
Nice words and prayer said as sunset fades

On to Earth Cemetery then
To be among his kin
There's your mother, Dene
Herb, Abe and Alene between

Such a poignant farewell
It might be a long spell
Till the reunion one day in the sky
Sadness becomes joy, no goodbyes

Richard "Dickey" Woodring was born March 21, 1946 at Hollis, OK. He was the adopted son of Alvin Ferguson "Jack" Woodring and Hilma Dene McLain. Richard grew up in Earth, TX and attended Springlake-Earth Schools. He was a retired truck driver. He passed away August 19, 2016 at 12:08 am in Lubbock's Covenant Medical Center, after a hard-fought battle with COPD.

His life was celebrated with reminiscing of cherished memories Sunday evening. At an intimate ceremony, Richard's ashes were scattered at Earth Cemetery where his mother is buried and Springlake Cemetery, the planned resting place of his wife, Twyla.

He is survived by his wife, Twyla; daughters, Tammy Woodring, Grand Island, NE; Tomaline Lopez, Franklin, IN; a son, Richard A.W. Woodring, Mars Hill, AK; seven grandchildren, Kevin Lung, Jarrette Glenn, Phillip Lung, Jr., Michael Lopez, Krystal Bodfield, Jonathon Baca, Shane Woodring, ten great-grandchildren, and five biological siblings, Sylvia Humphries, George Looper, Birdie Davidson, Bertha Segebartt and an unknown younger brother.

My Babies, such beautiful hearts



What a blessing our children were! Tammy, Tomaline and Richard came home to see their dad, and came back a few days later when he passed. They pitched right in cleaning out his apartment and having a garage sale. I don't know what I would have done without them. I am so proud of the adults they have become. Being your mother is my greatest blessing and joy. You have always melted my heart with your smiles.

It was my tenacity and stubbornness that prompted treatment before I had an irreversible heart attack. Sometimes, we just have to be our own advocate.

From the beginning, I always thought it was my heart, but no one could seem to figure out what was wrong with me. 9-25-16, I went to the emergency room with, not exactly chest pain, but a great deal of pressure, tightness and discomfort in the chest area. It went away and they sent me home.

Then I went to the ER a second time. 10-10-16. They ran every test known to man. None of those tests were remarkable. Everything seemed okay, for someone that has a completely blocked artery. It was discovered in 2013. They were unable to thread a stent at that time. It was collateral circulation that occurs as a result of anastomoses when branches form between adjacent blood vessels that saved my life from the heart attack I never knew I had.

After many EKGs and troponin levels, CT scan, echocardiogram, x-rays and a nuclear stress test, I was sent to UMC for a cardiac cath. They drew blood so often that I began to tell them "We only have 10 pints of blood, and you've already taken 22." The UMC cardiac team decided that I had costochondritis, an inflammation of the cartilage between the ribs. They sent me home, 10-11-16.

That night, about 3 miles south of Hale Center on I-27, we were traveling 65 MPH with the cruise on. My friend, Kellie Brown, who was driving, said a few choice words and sped up. Shortly thereafter, we were rear-ended. Now, how does that happen on an interstate? It was the most amazing accident. Looking at my car, you would never know it had been in a high speed accident. Even my taillights were not broken. We were thrown around like crash car dummies. Neither of us was hurt. Kellie had a bruise on her left shoulder, and I did not get a bruise or a scratch.

Another friend, Barbara Goodwin said it best, "It's like a big hand came down between the two cars, and said, 'Not yet.' "

Early Thursday morning, 10-27-16, between 3 and 4 am, I was awoken by that same pressure. I didn't see any need to go back to the ER, so I toughed it out until noon that day. Back in the ER, I told them, "Look, I'm not leaving here until you figure out what is wrong with me."

They put me in the hospital. The cardiologist, Kevin Jones said, "I believe your heart is asking for help. We can fix what is still alive, but once it dies, there is nothing we can do." That was enough to convince me. I was ready for a bypass or cardiac cath, whatever it took. He explained that almost all heart attacks happen between 3 and 5 am. At night, our bodies begin shutting down, and increasing the production of melatonin, preparing the body for rest and sleep. Then sometimes between 3 and 5 am, we get a sudden surge of adrenaline, signaling time to begin waking up.

I was sent to Covenant Hospital via ambulance. 10-28-16, Friday morning, three stents were placed. Dr. Juan Kurdi, the same doctor that attempted to open the artery in 2013, was able to open that artery, as well as the artery, known as the "widow maker" which was 80% blocked. In the process, an artery was nicked, and I bled out into the pericardium, losing just about a pint of blood. The bleed was repaired. On Monday, 10-31-16, the two other arteries were stented.

They did tell me that I definitely wasn't having a heart attack, but I was a massive heart attack looking for a place to happen.

This may not seem like much to many of you, just a series of coincidences, but I could have had a heart attack, I could have been killed in a high-speed car accident or I could have bled out, any of the three might have been deadly, but God has a plan. I give Him all the glory and honor for preserving my life once again. His purpose is unknown to me. I just pray I'm ready for whatever He calls me to do.

Tammy is living in Phillip, NE, a few miles from Grand Island. She has a great deal of pain from fibromyalgia. I found some lotion at Evalene's Imports, claiming to help with all kinds of pain. I sent her a bottle. She recently reported back that Two Old Goats lotion was the best she had ever used.

Kevin and Phillip were both here in August. I've sure missed those boys and their hugs. I wish Krystal could have come. I've never seen her two kids, Bianka and Lucas. She and Travis got married in September. Jonathon has a baby boy. Axel.



Axel Baca



Lucas & Bianka Bodfield



Krystal & Travis Bodfield



Tomaline come home driving a Tahoe. I thought she had just rented it, but no, she had bought it. I am so happy for her. She has always helped everyone, and thought of herself last. She is proud as punch and couldn't wait to surprise me.

Jarrette's three children continue to be such a blessing. Emaryl is turning into a good basketball player. She scores points in almost every game. And oh, my goodness, she just turned 13 becoming a member of that age old group "twixt 12 and 20". She wants what most teenagers wants, clothes and shoes and an American Girl doll. JaKoby is still the best football player on the YMCA teams for his age. I think he is going to be awesome one day. He only wants three things for Christmas, a hoverboard, motorcycle and a beebie (sic) gun. "Please, please, please, Santa. I have been a good boy." Kierra is her own person. She is a great artist and storyteller. She wants a talking diary and cotton candy machine that glows. I hope all that talent turns into successful careers. Their great-grandma is hoping for full university scholarships for all three.

Michael is still a gamer, but he has another passion and collects all things Batman. I like the big, black bat, too. He has action figures, Christmas stocking, a replica of the original Batmobile from the TV series, Magna-Doodle, Fathead, signs, pictures, costume, backpack, lunch boxes, replica of 1989 Batmobile, McDonald glasses from Batman Forever, and much more. His wish list includes a Batwing.

Rickey works long hard hours. He always gives more than 100%, and he gives that same devotion to God. He amazes me with his ability to quote chapter and verse. I do good to remember John 3:16 and the 23rd Psalm. When he was here, he repaired my oven that I had been turning off at the breaker because it was constantly on and my front door. He did such a beautiful job as good as any high-priced carpenter.

Shane is now 16. Hard to believe that he is almost a man. He has been helping his dad paint. With his earnings, he plans to purchase a special rod. He continues to be quite the bass fisherman. What is this? THAT doesn't look like a fish to me. I've said it before and I'll say it again, "And I thought fishing was such a safe sport."



Shane Woodring

Larry continues to save for that trip to Alaska; it should be the trip of a lifetime. I never thought he would do it; he is such a spendthrift. If he saw it and wanted it; he bought it. I am proud of him.

He is still the stat king and continues to update his website as soon as new information becomes available. He needs to provide for the site's future, and should considered willing it to one of the Lacrosse Hall of Fames so that it will be maintained from year to year. Larry is not getting any younger, even if he does think he is Super Wamp.

Last summer, his daughter, Sarah and granddaughter, Oonah came to visit. Oonah is such a beautiful little girl with big blue eyes. She will never want for anything. Her mom makes good money working for the school system in the NWT. One day, I hope to meet Sarah and Oonah and see the home she purchased on Prelude Lake. I also want to see the Northern Lights crackling and running wild in the skies over Yellowknife..

Larry's sister, Dianne retired and moved with friend, Ray to Pigeon Lake. Their dog pulled her down recently and she broke her shoulder. The pain has been excruciating. Larry says it isn't casted and will have to heal on its own. I sure hope it is better soon. Ray has a lot of trouble with his legs. Larry's other sister, Karen still lives in Oshawa with her friend, Michael. Karen loves to dance and they go almost every Saturday night.

May this Christmas end the present year on a cheerful note and make way for a fresh and bright 2017. Here's wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Santa Claus and Oonah
Kierra, Emaryl and JaKoby

Love,
Twyla & Michael