

ST. PATRICK
CATHOLIC
COMMUNITY

Stories

A Newsletter of Parishioners' Enlightening Stories of Life Events

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Eucharistic Minister Involvement
- Newsletter Notes From Fr. Eric Tellez

An Amazing at St. Patrick

By Fred Weber



Fred and Carole Weber

Intersection Community

In the January Stories Newsletter, Don Ponzeline recalled that he was a translator assigned to the Port of Bremerhaven, Germany to the ship, USS General Sturgiss, which transported displaced persons through the International Refugee Organization from Germany to the United States. As it turns out, my family was one of the many whom he served on that ship! When I read his story, I could hardly believe this person was actually in this parish! I hurried to introduce myself to him at the next 10:30 Mass. My story has merged with his twice now, once in 1951 and

now in 2010.

I was born in 1936 in a small German community, Deutsch Proben, Slovakia. My dad was a business man, and we farmed. With the outbreak of World War II, we had little information, but I do remember the tension. I clearly remember the eve of that war, when my grandmother took me out to the apple orchard to see a spectacular sunset. She wanted me to pray with her; she told me she remembered seeing a very similar sunset on the eve of World War I. Sure enough, war was coming our way.

As civilians we could do nothing to protect ourselves from the violence of war. God

was our Protector. By the spring of 1944, our village was the site of combat between the Germans and the Russians. Our family left Slovakia in October, rushing to stay ahead of the Russian army; we crossed the border on an icy Christmas eve, finding safety in a refugee camp in the US Zone of Occupation in Germany, near Regensburg, Germany. At that time my dear parents were desperate; it seemed like it would be the end of everything for us.

After living as Displaced Persons for seven years, we were approved to emigrate to the United States. This is what brought us to this

Newsletter Notes From Fr. Eric

I met Fred Weber through his wife Carole who works as a chaplain at Scottsdale Healthcare Shea Hospital for which St. Patrick provides Catholic clergy. This is just another "intersection" of which Fred speaks of in his story this month. As we get to know each other better in our community, we find more and

more how our lives "intersect" through our parish. I am proud that through this publication "Stories" Fred Weber was able to intersect again after many years with Don Ponzeline who had a great positive impact on his life. I am very dedicated to providing as many opportunities as possible for all of us at "St. Patrick Catholic

Community" to make relationships with each other.

Please read the Sunday bulletins for upcoming opportunities to get to know your fellow parishioners.

Peace in Christ,

Fr. Eric Tellez



Fred Weber

I dedicate my story to Don Ponzeline, with thanksgiving, and for the many gifts and blessings that happen in this beautiful spiritual community.

amazing intersection with Don Ponzeline, a kind and gracious usher at St. Patrick's 10:30 AM Mass.

We entered the Port of New Orleans on January 11, 1952 and were sponsored by Catholic Charities and a parish near Lincoln, NE. I was able to finish high school, even though when I began I only knew about two dozen English words. Not one to "stay put," I joined the Nebraska Air National Guard, and worked with F-86's and T-33's, close to the airplanes I loved.

I moved to Milwaukee, WI, attended Marquette University with a major in math and physics. Three other important things I learned from the Jesuits have helped me all my life: I could do nothing about my past; I could only prepare myself for the future by using the talents and opportunities God has given me; and I need to forgive those who harmed us. While in school, I worked two jobs, both with the Wisconsin National Guard and as a tour guide at the Pabst Brewery. We still struggled with poverty, though, and thoughts of a social life for me (girls) were nonexistent. We became US citizens in 1956.

My first engineering position after graduating was with General Motors. I was also a part-time graduate student. The dream started to take shape. Carole was from Denver and a student at Marquette. We met in March and were married in August of the same year.

I completed an MS in Mathematics in 1965. Family

merged with parish life in the Midwest. We were involved with Christian Family Movement in our parish in WI, and later with a Marriage Encounter in IA. Those experiences not only gave us life-long friendships, but also were pathways to deeper adult spirituality in our marriage and family. Despite the time I had to be away on business travel, Carole made a great home for all of us. Family life in Iowa was very rewarding, especially our rich parish life at St. Pius X. One of the ministries Carole worked in was refugee resettlement.

Fred Weber



That was one small way for us to say "thank you" to all the many people who had helped my parents and me over the years.

Still in love with airplanes, my engineering focus was on specialized electronic warfare systems applications. I worked for Rockwell Collins Radio, in Cedar Rapids, IA. In 1980 I graduated with an MBA from the University of IA.

With industry changes at the

end of the Cold War, we moved to Arizona in 1991, where I continued work in aerospace at Honeywell for 10 years.

We joined St. Patrick in 2003. I appreciate being a Eucharistic Minister, where I personally come in touch with the faith of so many good people. Carole now works as a chaplain at the Shea Hospital. Most of our children are 'coast-to-coast,' but we're lucky to have two of them here in AZ. We had a sweet family reunion in Yellowstone in 2008, and we all visit when we can.

Diagnosis of oral cancer was the beginning of another new life for me. After a few minor surgeries, the most recent and most difficult was the bone transplant of my jaw in 2007. Family love and spiritual support from many brought me through to recovery. God is so good.

From this end, and back to the beginning, I once again express my gratitude to Don Ponzeline, who was one of the kind translators at a German port and on a US Navy transport ship, when I immigrated to the United States. Who could imagine an association like this to emerge again after almost 60 years! I dedicate my story to Don with thanksgiving, and for the many gifts and blessings that happen in this beautiful spiritual community.



Carole & Fred Weber

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Eucharistic Ministers present the Body and Blood of Christ to those who come to Holy Communion at all liturgies