

# 75 Times Around the Sun

Nobody asked but ...

Yesterday I observed the 25th Anniversary of my 50th birthday. On the original occasion, I opined that, like Merle Haggard, I could say "my life's been grand!" I said at the time that I had lived a great half-century, therefore no matter what happened to me after that I could say that most of my life had been grand. The facts of the matter are that the continuing quarter-century has been even grander.

My wife, Lin, and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary in 2016. Most of my grandchildren have grown up, and half of my grandchildren and all of my great-grandchildren have come into the world since my 50th birthday.

I am the third oldest living member of my family, and the second oldest of our generation. Among our generation, we have lost only one cousin.

I have traveled to Bermuda, England, Wales, New Zealand, France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Germany, Aruba, Panama, Mexico, Canada, Hawaii, Spain, Gibraltar, and Ireland. I have finished visiting all of the 48 contiguous states of the USA. I have been to these places: Hamilton, St. Georges, Cardiff, Swansea, Carmarthen, Gwyly, Laugharne, Pendine, Tenby, Caldey Island, London, Horley, Brighton, Eastbourne, Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate, Auckland, Paihia, Tiritiri Matangi, Paparoa, Roturua, Cape Reinga, Kerikeri, Kawakawa, Whangerei, Paris, Limoges, Clermont-Ferrand, Lyon, Geneva, Lausanne, Montreux, St. Bernard Pass, Milan, Como, Bellagio, Bolzano, Innsbruck, Neuschwanstein, Schladming, Salzburg, Liechtensteinerklamme, Hallstadt, Munchen, Strasbourg, Neuilly-on-Seine, Oranjestad, Colon, Panama City, Huatulco, Acapulco, Cabo San Lucas, Victoria, Friday Harbor, Lahaina, Kihei, Haleakala, Orcas Island, Waccamaw River, Myrtle Beach, Hilton Head, Bluffton, Savannah, Asheville, Orlando, Bar Harbor, Bangor, Deer Island, Newport, Monomoy, Block Island, Isle of Palms, Georgetown, Coopers Rock, Alexandria Bay, Watertown, Lake Harmony, Mauch Chunk, Spokane, Coeur d'Alene, Vail, Gatlinburg, Charleston, Minneapolis, Wausau, Door County, Michigan City, Nashville, Knoxville, New York City, Boston, Hartford, Boise, Hot Springs, Cincinnati, Lake Forest, New Orleans, Baltimore, St. Michaels, Ocracoke Island, and Chicago.

I have seen the New Zealand All Blacks play rugby, in person, twice, as well as the national teams from Ireland (once) and the USA (twice). I have experienced 3 national basketball championships for the University of Kentucky Wildcats, of their total of eight.

I got to see my Mother live to 79 and my Father to 94. I still have my Irish, Bostonian, and Southern Kentucky heritage from them.

I have lived on my own farm now for 13 years, where I have learned how much I love redbuds and chicory. And for the last 25 years I have been involved in my second go-round of education, as a student and through becoming a teacher, where I have learned the value of knowledge, critical thinking, wisdom, philosophy, and computer science.

I have discovered an Internet full of virtual friends, as well as stronger connections with old actual friends. I have obtained many new friends, mostly rural neighbors and colleagues at Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (at the University of Kentucky).

I have become a voluntaryist, in name, to wrap up with principles, the way I have naturally learned to live my life. I have become a writer (having posted more than 700 articles and blog entries) and a philosopher (having facilitated more than 100 Shared Interest Group meetings in 4 years).

I have discovered the works of John McPhee, Bill Bryson, Simon Winchester, Jared Diamond, Malcolm Gladwell, James Gleick, David Deutsch, John von Neumann, Vannevar Busch, Claude Shannon, Frederic Bastiat, Murray Rothbard, James Burke, Ludwig von Mises, Julian Fellowes, Plato, Thomas Jefferson, Edmund Burke, Annie Proulx, Ayn Rand, Stieg Larsson, Henning Mankell, and Socrates.

New favorite television fare has been The Sopranos, Dexter, Longmire, Justified, Downton Abbey, Breaking Bad, Parenthood, Fargo, Cracker, Pushing Daisies, and Better Call Saul.

If it would not be too greedy, can I have another helping of life. Seeing how rich the last 25 years have been, not to mention the first 50, I expect much from whatever I may have remaining.

— Kilgore Forelle