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Forks in the Road and My Travel Through Life

Chapter 10 Idaho Falls 1982-1995

My New Job

Beaverton, Oregon and my job at Floating Point Systems is history. I returned to EG&G, Idaho mid February, 1982.

I reported as staff to my old boss, Dick French. He was the Division manager of the computer center and software development for all small computers scattered around the site.

I was not back for long and he asked me to be the Branch manager over a small group. They developed software for projects on the desert. They were professionals that would be easy to manage, and I accepted. The group had been wrestled away from the Physics Department in a power play. The Physics Department held a grudge. There was a lot of politics in play.

I was sitting at my desk one afternoon and the General Manager of EG&G, Ron Kiehn, walked through the door. His office is across the river and he never shows up in the TSA/TSB building where I was located.

He had to walk through a maize of cubicles to get to my office. Everyone was speculating. My secretary was in the cubicle outside my door, and he went right past her. She thought I must be in trouble.

I was surprised to see the General Manager and flabbergasted when he asked, "What do you advise me to do with my Floating Point Systems stock"? Whew, that was a relief. I advised him that based on what I know get rid of it. He thanked me and departed.

I discovered later that Dick French, Jim Zane, and Ron Kiehn, bought FPS stock based on my reports of what a great new computer FPS was coming out with.

Evidently, I had done a good job selling them when I went to work for FPS.

During this time personal computers were evolving with the DOS operating system. Mini-computers were proliferating in engineering/scientific applications.

Unix was the preferred operating system which was cryptic in the style of engineers. The user interface for entering commands for DOS and UNIX was a keyboard. A few of us sat around discussing the need for an operating system that was graphics based and user friendly. We discussed developing such a system in our afterwork hours and then selling the product. However, there was a problem. Vendors supplied software free to sell computers.

We concluded that nobody would pay for software, and went no further with the idea. Bill Gates came along later with Microsoft's Windows 1. The rest is history.

I was in the job about a year when there was a big reorganization. Ron Kiehn retired and Jim Zane replaced him as General Manager (GM). My boss, Dick French replaced Jim Zane as Associate General Manager (AGM) over all site services.

The group of people that I managed returned to their former organizations. My new job would be Staff to Dick French. When Dick was on travel, sick, or on vacation I was the Acting AGM. When acting I would be one of the four AGM's attending the weekly Senior Staff Meeting. I was up in the world.

I was heavily involved in advance planning for computers as well as projects around the site. The INEL had a bus fleet of about 40 to transport workers to the site. Most were more than 30 years old.

Dick French had me work on a replacement program for the entire fleet. I put together a proposal and presented it to DOE Idaho. Since there was no advance planning or funding for bus replacement we were told to go away. However, the seeds were planted, and it eventually happened.

The DOE realized that security at the National Labs and nuclear reactor sites needed upgrading to prevent terrorist acts. Security had an open checkbook.

I would hear what was being done in the weekly staff meetings. The INEL was spread over 890 square miles and upgrading security was getting a lot of attention. It was funny at times. Swat teams were trained, and they would need 4x4 SUV's.

A fleet of black vehicles was quickly procured. They arrived with shiny chrome bumpers and trim that would give them away at night. The solution was to paint the chrome black. Cold weather came and when the vehicle hit a bump the black paint fell off.

An armored vehicle with a big gun was brought in. During a training exercise they fired the gun as they were descending into a ravine and shot through the radiator.

We were in a staff meeting and the head of Security reported on the pending procurement of two helicopters. He planned to sole source two German Messerschmitts. Discussion went around the room and then it came my turn. I questioned why he was buying German helicopters. Bell made excellent helicopters.

It seems that Dick French used me as the devil's advocate in his staff meetings. The managers of various functions on the site were accustomed to telling the boss what he wanted to hear. I called them "yes" men.

I always sat on the left side of Dick in staff meetings. He would present an idea or solution to a problem and ask for comments. He would start with the manager on his right and then go around the table. The managers would agree with him. When it came my turn I would give my opinion, which was usually not in agreement. I believe he did it on purpose to get the managers to think rather than agree with him. It seemed to work. We got two American Bell Jet Ranger helicopters instead of German Messerschmitts.

The Cyber 176 I orchestrated with Control Data was running at full capacity due to the Three Mile Island incident. We needed more capacity quickly and started looking for offsite resources. Control Data operated Cybernet computer centers that sold time to outside users. We needed to take a look at what they had to offer. One center was in Sunnyvale, California and the other was in Los Angeles. Rockwell had a facility in Seal Beach that we would evaluate also.

Dick and I flew to San Francisco through Salt Lake. Western Airlines served free champagne and we had our share. In San Francisco Dick rented a Pontiac Firebird (his choice and not on the list of approved government rental cars) and we drove down to Sunnyvale.

On the way he said he does not travel well and was not sure if he would make the entire trip. We had a good dinner and evening at a restaurant across from the

Sheraton where we were staying. The next day we toured the Cybernet center. Dick was not feeling well. I assumed it was due to the night before. That afternoon he said he was going back to Idaho Falls and that I should continue the trip.

I drove Dick to the San Francisco airport. He didn't use credit cards and had cash to pay for the rental car. He insisted on giving me his cash for the rest of the trip. He would not need any as he would get on the airplane and be back in Idaho Falls by early evening. I returned to the Sheraton in the southbound commute traffic, and it took a couple of hours.

When I got back to the hotel I went to the restaurant and bar across the street for dinner and drinks. It was late when I got back to my room and my message light was flashing. The message was from Dick. His flight was cancelled, and he wanted me to come and get him at the airport. It is about a 40 minute drive in heavy traffic and I was not about to drive up there. I went to bed and the phone rang. I didn't answer.

I finished the trip and dreaded what I would face when I got back to work. I walked into the office Monday morning, he was fine, and laughed about it. He didn't have any money and spent the night in the airport. He was fortunate that he ran into an EG&G acquaintance that bought him something to eat.

Events That Effected My Future

In the late 1970's and early 1980's Control Data continued to lose ground in the supercomputer market. Their new product was the Cyber 180 line aimed at the general purpose market in competition with IBM. It was a bad mistake that cost them dearly.

Cray Research took over the supercomputer market. My friends Chris Christopherson and Bill Gray could no longer justify being based in Idaho Falls and were under pressure to move. I had been working on Bill to join EG&G and he finally did. Chris resigned and went with Network Systems as their salesman based in Idaho Falls.

In September 1983 Control Data spun off a new company, ETA Systems, to develop a new supercomputer to compete with Cray. Startup money and key design and management people was provided by Control Data. More on that later.

Cape Canaveral Proposal

In early 1983 EG&G Corporate in Massachusetts made the decision to bid on the NASA Cape Canaveral contract. Lockheed had been the contractor for many years. NASA put the contract up for bid rather than renew as usual. The contract would begin with the new fiscal year for a period of five years.

The proposal would be prepared utilizing EG&G Idaho personnel working on a moonlight basis and paid by Corporate. I was asked to work on the computer part of the bid after work and weekends.

I would go to a temporary office on 17th Street and work. It was a tough request for proposal and I figured there was no chance of us winning.

My job was to look at the massive array of computer systems and present how EG&G would transform and manage it. I was told to be bold and creative.

Our proposal was delivered and there was a long evaluation period. The winner was finally announced. Our bid won.

EG&G Florida was the new site services contractor for NASA at Cape Canaveral. Several of us that worked on the proposal were invited to transfer to Florida. I turned it down.

After EG&G took over it was a thrill to see the EG&G big red logo when the astronauts boarded the shuttle.

The INEL Contract Renewal

It is ironic that in 1994 the tables were turned. DOE put the INEL contract up for bid. It had been automatically renewed the last four or five contract periods of five years each.

Lockheed bid on the INEL contract and won. September 1, 1994 a Lockheed transition team arrived and took over the top management positions.

November 1, 1994 there was a wholesale replacement of EG&G managers with Lockheed people. It appeared to me that the new managers were Lockheed misfits and inept.

I never, liked working for the government, but it was a job that allowed us to live in Idaho Falls. Under Lockheed management it was intolerable. An early retirement option was offered and I retired January 25, 1995.

Five of us that took early retirement would meet every Thursday at 9am for breakfast at Brady's restaurant. They were still meeting as late as 2023. There were a couple of deaths and a couple of replacements. I would drop in once or twice a year after we moved from Idaho Falls.

Our Life In Idaho Falls 1982-1995

We resumed where we left off when we moved to Oregon. LaRue went back to work with Idaho First National Bank. It ended up later as Westone Bank and then U.S. Bank.

We rejoined the ski club and LaRue golfed and played bridge. I took up running in 1984 to lower blood pressure and cholesterol.

At first it was jog a quarter of a block and walk doing this over and over again. I gradually built up to where my 5:30am run was 2 miles out and 2 miles back six days a week. In the winter if the snow and ice was too bad I would use the track at Idaho Falls High School. The track was less than two blocks from the house and the school kept it plowed.

We bought bicycles and on a Sunday and good weather I had a 12 mile route.

We went skiing often at Kelly Canyon and a couple of trips a year to Big Sky, which was one of our favorite ski hills. We would stay in the spartan hostel to keep the expense down.

Our favorite routine at Big Sky was to ski the long runs using the gondola and the chair lift to the top of the bowl. It was about 2 miles of different terrain to the bottom. We would do that until late afternoon then take the short lift at the bottom up the south side. At the top there was a run down the back side of the mountain. Or you could bomb down different runs back to the lodge.

One time it was late afternoon, close to closing, and we took the run down the backside. The only way out was the chairlift to the top.

We got on the chairlift to get to the top and ski down the other side to the lodge.

By then the day would be over. We were about two thirds of the way up when the chairlift stopped. We were sitting about 30 feet in the air.

A ski patrolman came down and said it would be a while. There was an area power outage. They are working on auxiliary power to get us to the top. An hour or more went by and we were getting cold and the sun was setting behind the mountain.

The lift started moving slowly. We made it to the top and bombed down the other side as it was getting dark.

We hurried back to the hostel to change and get to a restaurant. We were told they would be serving cold sandwiches by candlelight.

It was fun making do. It was pitch black when we got back to the hostel. We had matches but no flashlights. LaRue had me light matches so she could see to get her contacts out. We learned a lesson. After that we always have an adequate supply of flashlights.

Targhee always had a ton of snow and often difficult. Jackson Hole was usually bitter cold. Sun Valley usually lacked snow as this was before snow making.

We went with the ski club to Jackson Hole, hooked up with Kay and Lamon Lott, and Neil and Pat Cox at a nice place for dinner. The Cox's were older and didn't ski, but liked to be part of the crowd. Pat had a sweatshirt with "All Tetons are Not Grand Tetons" on the front. It was funny considering her size.

The Cox's had a funny little houseboat. It was always on the verge of sinking. We went with them and the Lotts to Red Fish Lake. The Cox's departed early with the houseboat and the rest of us would come later. We caught them as they pulled into the Outlet Campground and followed them in.

Neil stopped at a vacant campsite and was trying to back the houseboat in. He was having a bad time. I wanted to mess with his mind and honked and yelled which added to his frustration. He jumped out yelling, then saw who it was.

Another time the outboard wouldn't start at Palisades Dam. We worked and worked to no avail. We went back to our campsite and the Cox's, Lott's, and LaRue played bridge the rest of the afternoon.

I later read there were 10 of those houseboats were built, and 8 sank. It was basically a small travel trailer on pontoons with an outboard motor on the back.

President's Day holiday is one of the few times that LaRue got three days off in a row.

We made it a practice on that holiday to ski in Utah. Over the years we enjoyed Park Valley, West Park Valley, Deer Valley, Alta, and Robert Redford's Sundance.

At Sundance we parked and saw the chairlift was not running due to a power failure. We headed to the lodge and saw a guy sitting on the front steps that looked like Robert Redford. We went by him and into the lodge to look around.

The real Robert Redford came dashing in dressed in ski clothes and yelling instructions about getting the power restored. The guy on the steps quickly disappeared.

An RV Again

On July 8, 1983 my brother, Garry, called me from Jerome. He worked at the Tupperware plant in Jerome and Bonnie taught school. He had seen an ad for a 1979 21 ft Security Traveler travel trailer that was for sale.

What caught his attention was that the trailer was bought new at the Security manufacturing plant in Boise, towed to Twin Falls, and never used. It sat in the guy's driveway for over four years.

I called to see if he would budge off his \$5,500 price. No way and he was firm. We bought it without seeing it. It was just what we wanted in a travel trailer.

We drove down on a Saturday morning and the trailer was exactly as advertised. Labels, tags, and wrapping was still on the appliances. I hooked up the suburban and we towed it to Garry and Bonnie's place after getting air in the tires. We found there was a pin hole leak in the water heater. It was probably the result of the same water in it for years.

When we got home I pulled the tank and took it to First Street Welding. They brazed over the pinhole for something like five dollars. Never a problem after that.

I dug out my journal that I began when we bought our first trailer in Livermore in

1968.

(Note I started the journal when we bought the 17ft 1968 Golden Falcon in January 1968. I logged every trip we took with the trailer and subsequent trailers. It eventually took two journals with all entries also on a computer spreadsheet "our-rvtravel". The spreadsheet totals the nights and miles towed by year and overall total for every trailer we owned)*

On July 22, 1983 we hooked up the trailer for a long vacation trip beginning with Max and Loa at their cabin in Oregon. Going down the Columbia River Gorge we hit high winds and stopped at Memaloose State Park and stayed for \$5. The next day it was on to the cabin. We stayed four days before heading towards home with a few stops.

We planned on camping at Wallowa Lake near Joseph, Oregon but it was rodeo days, and every campsite was taken. We proceeded over mountain roads towards Hells Canyon and camped at Blackhorse campground for free.

Then it was a steep winding dirt road down into Hells Canyon where we found an Idaho Power campsite for \$3 per night at the Hells Canyon Dam. From there we went through Cambridge to Boise to overnight. It was so hot we could hardly sleep.

Our next stop was Red Fish Lake. We went by way of the mountains through Horseshoe Bend and over to Lowman. I wrote in my log, "Toughest 17 miles to Lowman from Crouch in the world". The washboards in the road were so bad it would bring you to a near stop.

We spent the first night in the overflow area near Red Fish Lake. The next day we got site #23 in Sockeye for \$6 per night. We stayed for five nights. Kathleen came from Boise for two nights. We returned to Idaho Falls by way of Challis, Mackay, and Arco on August 7. Towed the trailer 1,632 miles on its first shakedown trip.

We enjoyed many weekend trips over the years with the trailer to Birch Creek, Stoddard Creek Campground near Monida Pass, Palisade Dam, Victor, Massacre Rock State Park, Craters of the Moon, and Island Park.

In 1984 LaRue's mother, Mattie, had been living alone in Providence, Utah since Morris passed away in 1979. The family decided she needed to be with one of us.

On July 8 we went down and moved a load in the Suburban. We went down the next weekend for another load and brought Mattie home to live with us. Loi and Val were now in St Anthony and would be close to help out. It turned out she could not be left alone all day and we moved her into an assisted living facility a few blocks from us.

In August we took a one week vacation at Red Fish Lake with the trailer. We were in the Outlet Campground space #47 which is same spot we had in 1975 with the previous trailer. One morning a Lynx came walking through our campsite.

We spent the Labor day holiday with the folks at Summit Creek. Summit Creek is about midway between Howe and Patterson. It is where Richard, me, and Garry ran off the road in a snowstorm in 1949. We came close to not making it out alive.

New Opportunity -1984

Just before Thanksgiving 1984 I slipped away from work to have coffee one morning with my friend Chris. He had an office in the old Rogers Hotel building downtown.

We were visiting and his phone rang. I could tell that it was an old friend from our Control Data days. It was Bob Robertson who recommended me for the job in Switzerland. He was now the VP of Sales and Marketing at the new company, ETA Systems. We knew ETA Systems was recently spun off from Control Data to build the world's fastest supercomputer.

Bob was putting together a sales and marketing staff and invited Chris to come to St Paul for an interview. Chris said he was interested, and that Harry was sitting in his office. Then Bob wanted to talk to me. He invited me to come back with Chris and talk about joining ETA Systems.

Changing jobs was not something I had in mind and laughed it off. The last thing Bob said was to think about it. Chris had made up his mind to go. He started working on me.

Eventually I decided I might as well go along and find out what this new computer was all about. It would be useful information that I could use in advance planning for computing at the INEL.

Later I told Dick French that I would like to take a couple of days vacation and the reason for it. He agreed that it was worth looking into.

Chris and I flew to Minneapolis as soon as we could arrange reservations. Bob put on the full court press when we arrived.

He was a big likeable guy. He was a good old Texas guy, and everyone called him Bobby. We called him Bob as Bobby seemed juvenile. In his college days he was the quarterback for Texas and played against Don Meredith, the quarterback at SMU.

When Bob talked you paid attention. He was looking for former Control Data salesmen that he knew. One for the east, one for the south, one for the midwest, and one for the west, which would be Chris. The salesmen would get a low base salary and work on commission. They could take a monthly draw against future commissions until sales got going, which was expected to be one to two years.

Bob offered me a sales support job. It would be the same as I performed successfully at Richland and Idaho Falls. He said he had something else in mind for me after things got going. It was a lot to think about.

The new people would reside where they live rather than relocate. We could find an office to rent in Idaho Falls. Chris was sold.

We toured the new facility and met the lead design engineer, Tony Vacca, and the lead software/hardware system architect, Neil Lincoln.

The ETA supercomputer was based on the old Control Data Star vector processor that never found success, and its follow on design the Cyber 205 that had limited success. This was mainly because of the chip technology available at the time.

ETA would be using new high density 10,000 gate array CMOS chips that generate very little heat. This was a huge problem in supercomputers. Seymore Cray had gone to circulating inert oil to cool the circuits.

The dense technology allowed the entire CPU on a single chip. The chip size was about ½ inch on each side.

With very little heat being generated ETA would have a low cost air cooled system called the Piper. The Piper was small and would compete with the Cray-1 at one

fifth the cost.

The technology immersed in liquid nitrogen would produce a 10 times increase in speed. It would be 10 times faster than the competition and priced at \$10-\$20 million depending upon the configuration. It would be the ETA-10.

. Liquid nitrogen was not used for cooling but for shrinking travel distance for electrons. It was a huge challenge that had been solved. We were shown the prototype system in operation.

We were sitting in Bob's office before lunch and the ETA President, Lloyd Thorndyke, stuck his head in the door. He said, "Have you got these guys signed up yet?"

Then we all went to the company cafeteria and had lunch together. Lloyd Thorndyke was one of the original Control Data cadre and a very likeable person that you could visit easily with. We were impressed.

However, we had a concern. The Cyber 205 operating system was being ported to the ETA system to save cost and development time.

The engineering/scientific world was moving to UNIX across all platforms and was free. The Cyber 205 operating system came at a cost and would be a hard sell. Bob assured us that UNIX was in the planning stage. That eased our concern.

On our way home we both decided we would go to work for ETA Systems. It was too big of an opportunity to pass up. We would be in on the ground floor and could get rich.

I went over everything with my boss, Dick French. He agreed that it was something that I should do. I could always come back.

Life With ETA Systems

I was on board with ETA the 2nd week of December 1984 and Chris about a week later. We scoured Idaho Falls for suitable office space and decided on the old Rogers Hotel building.

We bought desks, chairs, and office supplies to get us going. It all went on my expense report, and I was reimbursed by ETA. After we were set up we bought

booze and invited friends at EG&G for an office warming and preview of ETA Systems computers. We were in full scale sales mode by Christmas.

Bob hired former Control Data salesmen for Chicago, Miami, and Houston. He also hired a non Control Data person in Washington DC. It was somebody I knew well, Ron Swartz. He was the DOE long range computer planning and budget manager when we were going through our upgrades at the INEL.

It was fun to work with Ron on the same side of the fence. He knew the ins and out's of government procurement. We made a joint presentation to his old group at DOE Headquarters that was fun. Cancer claimed him a couple of years later.

There was a lot of travel with our territory being the western states. There were also frequent meetings at Headquarters in St. Paul.

A sales call I enjoyed the most in early 1985 was to the huge NASA facility between New Orleans and Biloxi, Mississippi. Chris and I flew to New Orleans and met up with a Control Data analyst. He would introduce us to the NASA people.

He recommended we eat at Paul Prudhomme's famous restaurant, K-Paul's Louisiana Kitchen in New Orleans. I had seen it featured on TV several times . It was a great experience.

We spent the day at NASA and that evening went to Biloxi to look around and have dinner. It was fun for me as I spent 6 months in 1955 going to radio school at Keesler AFB in Biloxi.

Our most important prospect was Lawrence Livermore Lab in Livermore, California. It was a treat to call on people where I had worked in the late 1960's.

In late 1985 we were attending a sales meeting in St. Paul when Bob Robertson revealed what he had in mind for me. Chris had too much territory with all the western states.

Bob wanted me to become the salesman for the INEL in Idaho Falls, Hanford in Richland, Lawrence Livermore Lab and Sandia Lab in Livermore, and NASA Ames Research Center in Sunnyvale. I would work out of the Idaho Falls office the rest of 1995 and see how it worked. I

It was a chance to make a lot of money if I could pull off a \$20 million sale, and I agreed to it.

It didn't change much of what I had been doing except I would not be traveling with Chris. He would not be going to Livermore. I would be traveling to California at least every other week. I never understood why Chris accepted giving up these prime prospects, but it didn't seem to bother him.

The Foreign Friend Episode

The week before Christmas 1987, I had to be at Headquarters in St. Paul for meetings. I finished up and got on a plane in the afternoon.

I was upgraded to first class. We were delayed for departure and the flight attendant began serving drinks to the first-class passengers. We all started talking and the guy in front of me was really interesting.

He was English but lives in Zermatt, Switzerland. I asked him a few questions about Zermatt to see if he was being honest. His answers added up with what I knew.

The reason he was in the U.S is that he buys race horses for wealthy Saudi Arabians. He was on his way to Bay Meadows in the Bay Area. His name was Chris. *(my coworkers name is Chris,also. I will refer to him as CC for Chris Christopherson, so there is no confusion in the following)*

We finally took off and I could see we were not gaining altitude nor making any turns. The Captain announced that the hydraulic system had failed.

We would make a slow wide turn to return to the airport and make an emergency landing. "Do not be alarmed when fire trucks and ambulances chase us down the runway after we touchdown".

We landed and rolled to a stop in the middle of the runway at the far end with all the equipment around us. We were towed to a gate and got off to await further word.

I belonged to the Crown Room, so I invited new friend Chris to be my guest. He hit the free booze hard. Four hours later the aircraft was ready to go. When we got to Salt Lake I had missed the last flight to Idaho Falls. Chris was able to connect

to a flight to Oakland and we parted.

Around 4pm a couple of days later CC and I were sitting in our office in Idaho Falls, and the phone rang. It was my new friend, Chris, and he was at the bus station in Idaho Falls. What a surprise that was.

I went to the bus station and he was there with only a small satchel. I thought that was strange. We went back to the office and I introduced Chris to CC, and we went down to the bar for a drink.

Chris explained that he had flown to Butte to see an old friend, but nobody was home. It was a short trip by bus, so he thought he would come to Idaho Falls.

Being polite I invited him for dinner. Brian, Kathleen, and Julie were home for Christmas as well as my folks. One more would not be a problem.

Chris ate very well and never turned down a drink. In fact, he was putting them down rather fast. We had a spare hide-a-bed in the basement, and I offered it to him for the night. He quickly accepted.

In the meantime CC called and asked if he and his wife, Diane, could stop in. He was impressed with Chris and wanted Diane to meet him. They were big in the Idaho Falls opera group. They invited Chris to attend the opera Christmas party the next night. They didn't invite us.

CC and Diane went home and everyone drifted off to bed. It was down to me Chris. I was showing him where his bed was when he said he was short of money, and asked for a loan of \$500. I told him that we could talk about it in the morning.

He insisted on the money now and wouldn't accept wait until morning. That was it for me and told him I was taking him to a hotel. He said he had no money for a hotel.

Then we will go to the bus station. The bus station was closed. The next option is the freeway, and he can hitchhike.

It was 20 below zero. I didn't care at that point. Maybe the airport terminal would be open. It was, and I dropped in off with his little satchel in hand.

The next morning everyone was asking, "Where's Chris", and I told the story.

Mom thought it was pretty dumb and dangerous hauling Chris around late at night and alone.

I was glad I got rid of him as I was having doubts before he even asked for money. It didn't make sense that he absolutely needed the money that night.

I decided to go to the airport and see if he caught a flight. He was still there. He asked again for money so he could buy a ticket. I was not about to give him any.

Then he needed eight dollars so he would have enough for a bus ticket. He had several rolls of 35mm film and wanted me to buy the lot. I bought two rolls for ten dollars, and dropped him at the bus station.

I called CC and told him what had taken place. He worried that Chris would show up at their place to attend the opera party that evening.

I never heard from Chris again. The film turned out to be expired and no good.

Climbing Mt Borah – 1st Try

On September 12, 1985 I towed the trailer to the foot of Mt Borah and parked beside the earthquake scarf. I spent the night and returned early the next morning to work. LaRue and I returned that Friday evening.

My climbing partners, Ron Raymond and Pat Rafferty arrived later and set up their camp. I was surprised that Pat had his 10 year old daughter with him. She was going to make the climb also.

We were up early Saturday morning . It was cloudy, cold, and threatening snow. I had cold weather Gortex gear. Ron and Pat only had light coats and no gloves. Pat's daughter didn't have a coat. LaRue gave her a coat and said she would walk up the primitive road to the trail head with us. On the way up LaRue talked the daughter into staying with her in the trailer.

We headed up the trail and Pat took off. Ron was not in good shape, so I paced myself with him.

By the time we got to the tree line it was snowing hard. We could not see Pat on the exposed parts of trail going up the mountain.

I was concerned about Ron and told him to head back to camp while I try to catch Pat. I thought we should abort the climb. T

he tree line was about 10,000 feet and I was to 11,000 ft when I caught up to Pat. He had stopped at chicken out ridge as he didn't see a way to continue. This is the most dangerous part of the climb.

It was snowing hard with about six inches of new snow. I convinced him that we were going down the mountain. We got down to tree line and Ron was there freezing to death.

I had directed him to go down. He felt he should stay in case we needed a rescue. It was not a good scenario but we got back to camp ok.

Pat and his daughter headed back to Idaho Falls and Ron stayed to camp with us for the night. Ron and I were rather shook as the day could have very easily ended in disaster due to Pat's recklessness.

Ron, LaRue, and I went to Mackay for a steak and quite a few drinks.

Ron and I made a pact to try again next year.

Climbing Mt Borah – Success #1

We scheduled the 2nd try to climb Mt Borah for August 19, 1986 on my 50th birthday. Joining me would be Ron Raymond, Pat Rafferty, and Lynn Hower from EG&G. Larry Cook my ETA Systems coworker based in Seattle flew over for the climb.

Larry and I hooked up the trailer early Friday August 18 and went to the Mackay Dam to set up camp. Ron and Pat would drive up in the afternoon. Lynn would fly up in his Cessna 185. He would buzz us and land at a ranchers private landing strip at Dickie where we would pick him up. The rancher had a hand painted sign on the highway pointing to "Dickie International Airport".

We had camp set up and Lynn flew over about 100 feet off the deck to let us know he had arrived. We went to pick him up and he invited us to get in. We would fly up and over Mt Borah to scout it out.

We jumped in and away we went. His Cessna 185 is a powerful back country plane that he uses on his 2nd job as a bush pilot in Alaska. We went straight up the mountain checking the trail and circled the top. The summit looked small .

I didn't see how we could all stand on it at the same time. Chicken Out ridge looked impossible. I thought of backing out of the climb.

(Note Lynn Hower and I had something in common. He lived in Stibnite while his dad worked there in the late 1940's. He still has a cabin at Big Creek about 30 miles from Yellow Pine. He got stranded in Big Creek a year after our climb. He had flown in and there was a large snowfall and he couldn't take off. There was nothing available to plow the landing strip, so he caught a ride to Yellow Pine. He found an old guy with a homemade steam powered snow plow. They fired up the boiler and drove it to Big Creek and plowed a strip for Lynn to take off. The summer of 2019 we saw the old snowplow parked in Yellow Pine.)*

We were up at 4am and at the trail head at 5am. I wanted to hit the trail at first light.

The first hour or more of climbing to the tree line is a tough scramble and tiring. It was a short break at tree line and we continued on fairly good trail through shale for another hour to a flat spot where we took a break.

This was the spot two or three climbers were killed by lightning several years earlier. Then it was on up to chicken out ridge. Pat behaved himself on this climb. I paced myself with him, Ron, and Lynn while Larry went out ahead.

We got to chicken out ridge and Larry was spread eagled on the knifelike ridge about 50 ft up. He was afraid to go any further.

I climbed up to give moral support. We crawled along looking down about 1,000 ft on the left of us. We got to a safe spot and Lynn yelled he found a better route on the right side of the ridge.

I watched Lynn, Pat, and Ron casually stroll up that route and join us. They said it was easy except for a ledge and a step across blue sky to the other side.

The rest of chicken out ridge was a scramble. It ends with a 15 ft drop onto a snowfield that that we had to cross.

If you slip on the snowfield it is a 2,000 ft slide into the rocks at the bottom of a canyon. A climber a year or so later slid to his death on it.

From there it was an easy traverse across a bowl to the final 800 ft or so vertical scramble to the top.

The scramble was fine scree and straight up and was tough going. I ventured off to the right and found easier going around boulders but on solid shale. I looked straight down on the upper Pahsimeroi. That was a better route but everyone seems to fight the scree.

I was the first to the summit and welcomed the others. Lynn handed me a beer and that was the last thing I wanted. Food didn't taste good either at 12,655 ft.

Ron brought a flag with my name and "Climb for 50" on it. We took some pictures.

It was a beautiful sunny day and we had a 360 degree view. We spent an hour on top and headed down.

Our climb was 5 hours up and 3 ½ hours down. We got to the bottom and Larry started showing us the rocks he collected. He had about 30 pounds of rock in his backpack.

Climbing Mt Borah – Success #2

The next Mt Borah climb was for my 53rd birthday in August 1989. This time it was me, Ron Raymond, and his girl friend Cindy. I pulled the trailer to Mackay Dam on August 17 and they arrived and put up a tent.

We hit the trail at daybreak August 18. Cindy was about 20 years younger than Ron and had no trouble keeping pace.

I found the easy route through chicken out ridge and we were on the summit in 4 hours 25 minutes.

It was a cool day and we spent an hour on top. Coming down was 3 hours 15 minutes. We could see lightning in the valley and moving towards us as we were descending.

I thought about the two aluminum canteens I had in my backpack. We met two guys coming up and one had a metal golf club sticking out of his backpack. I complimented him on his lightning rod he had sticking in the air. We had rain the last 30 minutes coming down.

This made one aborted climb and two successful climbs of Mt Borah.

Climbing Mt Borah – Success #3

The next climb was around my 58th birthday in 1994. Gary Slette wanted to go as well as our Salmon friend, Grant Havemann. Gary had a banker friend, Bill Babcock, who would go also.

Bill had a house in Mackay where we could spend the night. The Havemann's had a daughter that lived in Hailey so she would drive to Hailey and LaRue and Kathleen would go to the condo in Sun Valley. We would all meet at the condo for dinner after we climbed Mt Borah. I met Gary and Bill in Mackay and Grant flew from Salmon to Mackay in his twin engine Piper Navajo.

I trained hard for the climb. I would do my morning run then run up and down the stadium steps at Idaho Falls High School for 10 reps. I was probably in the best shape in my life.

We hit the trail at daybreak and didn't stop until the tree line. Two guys were in their sleeping bags. We talked to them briefly and headed on up the mountain.

I looked back and they had packed up in hurry and were trying to overtake us. We got to chicken out ridge and I found the slot to the right for the easy way through. Chicken out ridge had the two guys behind us stymied and we left them far behind.

Bill Babcock complained most of the way up that I was trying to kill everyone.

The only break we took was after we traversed the bowl and stopped in the saddle before the last 800 ft vertical to the top.

The top was in the clouds when we got there and there was no view to enjoy. We headed down and met the other two guys coming up.

We hit the saddle and while traversing across the bowl we met a large group of

climbers from Boise. Gary knew them so we stopped to visit and give advice.

By then the summit had cleared of fog and clouds so they would have a great view. Nobody in our group wanted to go back up and enjoy the view that we had missed.

We got to the Suburban and were enjoying a beer . Grant pulled out a giant round loaf of bread from his pack that he had baked. It must have weighed 10 pounds . He packed it up and all the way down before he thought to get it out. The beer and bread hit the spot.

We made it to the summit in 4 hours and the descent was 3 hours. The time at the top was about 30 minutes as it was cold and miserable.

Climbing Mt Borah – 5th Try

The next attempt was a totally different experience. It was around the summer of 2000 when we were in the motel in Arco.

We had two Idaho Power guests every year that hauled fish from the hatchery in Hagerman to the hatchery by Ellis on the Salmon River. We talked about climbing Mt Borah and one of them had a brother who wanted to try the backside. I had always heard that it had not been climbed.

The geologist had also discovered Idaho's only glacier on the backside when he was a student at Idaho State. He was on a weekend trip exploring geology and came back to school and told his professors who thought he was crazy. He took the professors and they confirmed that it was a glacier that nobody knew about.

The geologist would go with us and show us the glacier if we climbed the backside.

We departed the motel very early and drove to Mackay and over Double Springs Pass at Dickey. Then it was a turn south through the Horse Heaven Hills and a right at Mahogany Creek to the end of the primitive road.

We then bushwacked south until we came to a long meadow heading west and upwards towards the mountain. We saw two of the biggest bull elk a trophy hunter would die for. They were just standing and watching us.

At the end of the meadow it was a scramble up to a ridge running north south and

parallel to Mt Borah. We went down the other side of the ridge and up to where we could see the glacier.

Then we climbed back up the ridge and it was a steady gain in elevation to where the ridge curved to Mt Borah. At that point I could see Marion Lake and Pass Lake to the south. We were about a 1,000 ft below the summit of Mt Borah.

We could not see any way to the summit from where we were unless we had ropes and climbing gear. Everyone was shot and it was time for a rest. I decided to continue up the ridge for a closer look at the summit and to assess the difficulty.

I confirmed it was straight up vertical rock. I could see people on the summit looking down and probably wondering about those fools down there.

We rested a while and began the long trek back to the trucks. It was a long day, but the scenery was worth the trip.

Our Life – 1986

Chris and I were frequent flyers on Western Airlines and on a first name basis at the check-in counters. In March 1986 Western Airlines gave both of us complimentary first-class tickets for two to any destination in Mexico.

Chris said that he and Dianne would go to Mazatlan. We decided to be different and go to Puerto Vallarta in April.

I had credits for free stays at Sheraton hotels as I always stayed at the Sheraton Midway in Minnesota and the Sheraton Pleasanton in California. We would use credits and stay free at the Sheraton Buganvilia in Puerto Vallarta for three nights.

We caught the Friday morning flight from Idaho Falls to Salt Lake and then on down with a short stop in Los Angeles.

Western Airlines was promoting Mexico and had just started their highest level of service. In first class it was called “Royal” on their Hawaii and Mexico flights.

Lunch started with four large prawns and cocktail sauce. Then we chose filet mignon that was restaurant quality, and then a nice dessert. All service was with glassware and china. The booze and wine was high quality also.

There was hardly anyone in first class. I was all over videotaping with my new Sony camcorder. We were on a roll when we got to Puerto Vallarta.

We checked in and I went out on the balcony to look out over the pool and the ocean. I came back in and LaRue was standing there with black all over her hands and white pants. She had been working on the toilet. The water kept running so she took the lid of the tank and adjusted the float. That was the end of her toilet fixing. We had dinner at the pool side restaurant.

I went for a run the next morning towards the city center. I got to the Malecon and there was a fish market and small boats unloading their morning catch.

I stopped to look and a guy named Carlos invited me to a timeshare presentation. I had read about timeshares and no way was I interested. Carlos said we would get a free breakfast and it would take just one hour for the presentation. The taxi would be paid both ways. I thought "what the heck - might as well get a free breakfast" and agreed to go.

We went to the Villa del Mar resort and had a nice breakfast. We sat through the presentation and told the interviewer no thanks.

Then a more senior person sat down and it was no thanks again. Then another person arrived with special deals. A one bedroom condo for a fixed week per year for 25 years was around \$4,000. The week in Puerto Vallarta could be traded for a week in any resort in the world that is listed with Interval International. Financing was instantly available with a qualified credit card and small down payment.

It was getting interesting. People were buying and there would be applause. We got caught up in the moment and signed on the line.

We were invited to the Mexican Fiesta that evening as guests of the sales manager and his wife. We could move to the Villa del Mar and stay for something like \$10 per night. We hurried back to the Sheraton, packed up, and moved.

The Fiesta was a lively with free drinks, food, and entertainment all evening. We made it to our room and woke up in the morning with a severe case of "buyer's remorse". This was the dumbest thing we had ever done.

I hurried down to the office to back out of the deal only to find that there is no backing out in Mexico. We bought a timeshare. We made the most of the rest of

our time in Puerto Vallarta, had a good time, and flew home wondering whether to tell anyone what we had done.

A year went by and we returned in April 1987 to use our fixed week. Julie was on spring break and came with us.

I had a lot of frequent flyer miles and we flew First Class again. The nice thing about Western Airlines is that you accumulated miles even if you were using them to fly. The net result was that you gained almost as many as you used.

When we checked into the Villa del Mar they requested that we attend a presentation to get an update on what was going on at the resort. Might as well get updated and get a free breakfast also.

The next morning Julie slept in and LaRue and I went to the presentation. We went through the “no thanks” routine a couple of times. Then special offers were produced. We ended up upgrading to a two bedroom unit with the fixed week in October. We thought that another \$2,000 or so was worth having two bedrooms in the event we had guests.

They threw in some bonus weeks also, and they came in handy in 1988. In reality the value of the bonus weeks was worth more than we spent for the upgrade.

Julie couldn't believe what we had done, and we didn't either. We had a great week in Puerto Vallarta ,and took a tour every day.

The next year the Villa del Mar owners bought the property next to them and the Villa Del Palmar was built. We could access both properties.

(It turns out that the timeshare worked very well for us. It made us think about a vacation every year. We traded a couple of times for the Bahamas and Mazatlan and rented once in Cabo San Lucas. We liked Puerto Vallarta the best and never traded again. We returned every year and sometimes twice a year by renting a week. The contract ended after 25 years and we continued renting every October. The timeshare was worth every penny. We still see people that have been coming for years.)

On March 27, 1986 I was driving by Smith Chevrolet. We had our 1978 Suburban for almost 8 years so I thought I would stop and look.

They had just received a new 1986 Suburban that was dark grey on the top and bottom and black in the center with red striping. It was ready to go with running boards and everything. The list price was \$21,091 and they offered \$6,291 for the 1978 that we bought for \$8,500. We now had a new 1986 Suburban.

Julie had been driving the Dodge Colt as she had a job at Scotties. I had acquired a used 1983 Oldsmobile Omega a couple of years earlier for my transportation. It had belonged to Dr. Arbon who smoked big cigars. It took about a year to get rid of the cigar smoke.

Kathleen was teaching at Kimberly High for a couple of years after graduating from Boise State. She was living in an apartment in Twin Falls and dating Gary Slette. We didn't meet Gary until we all met at Redfish Lake August 2.

That was our introduction and the infamous verbal interchange between Gary and Julie. Gary greeted Julie with something like, "You must be the spoiled brat that gets everything". Julie shot back, "You must be the ...hole from Minnesota". It about floored us all. It didn't take long to get acquainted.

Brian was also a graduate of Boise State and was working for a finance company in Boise. He had met Tina at Boise State and it looked like things were getting serious.

Julie would be starting her second year at BYU in the fall.

The Job - 1986

With me being a salesman Bob Robertson thought we needed an analyst in the bay area for sales support. An ex Control Data analyst, Mike, had been pestering ETA Systems for a job and he lived in San Mateo, California. He said he had close contact with people in my accounts, and especially at Lawrence Livermore Lab. Bob hired him based on his word and resume.

I was not happy when I discovered who it was. I knew Mike to be a lazy opportunist. However, I was stuck with him. He would continue to live in San Mateo.. We found an office for him to work out of, and where I could hang my hat when I was in the area.

I took him with me to Livermore and discovered they barely knew of him. He was a bust as far as I was concerned. He did know a couple of people at NASA Ames

Research Center in Sunnyvale, so that was of some help.

I continued to press for an additional analyst that knew the Livermore Lab as well as the INEL. The analyst was Larry Cook in the Control Data Seattle office.

He had also been a customer engineer at Lawrence Livermore on the Star computer in the early 1970's. He made the Shark Club for that effort the same year as I made the Shark Club. When I was at EG&G he would accompany the Control Data salesmen when he came to Idaho Falls. Larry was an avid runner and coached me when I took up running. Eventually he was hired, and I had an analyst who was an asset.

I set up a corporate visit for Lawrence Livermore Lab management. The date was January 28, 1986, and we were meeting in the board room at ETA Systems. I was in the midst of my presentation when someone stuck their head in the door and announced the space shuttle Challenger had blown up after launch. That sucked the air out of the room and the disaster took over the meeting. I am not sure they took away much after that.

Larry and I took them to dinner at the special Swiss restaurant in Stillwater that everyone liked. We did the whole nine yards with cigars (for them) and rounds of cognac after dinner. I submitted the tab on my expense report and later got a call from Bob's secretary. She asked, "Are you sure there wasn't a couple more people at the dinner"? Being quick on my feet I came up with two more names and all was well. I called the two people to make sure they were in the loop.

Change Is In the Air – 1986

Late summer of 1986 Bob Robertson decided I needed to be in Livermore full time, and asked me to move. The company was depending on an order from the lab for an ETA-10.

The problem was that the first working production model had been slipping and was still two years away. It is difficult to sell something you don't have. The Lab was satisfied with their Cray computers and looking forward to Seymour Cray's new Cray-2. I went through all this with Bob and said I would give it a year in Livermore if the company rented a house and furniture. If things started looking better we would move. He agreed.

LaRue gave notice at the bank and we prepared for California. We flew to

Oakland in September to find a place to rent. We settled on a townhouse in Pleasanton and found a place to rent furniture.

It also had a fenced lot where we could park the trailer. We flew home and I drove the Olds down with a few household items. I worked a couple of weeks and left the car at the Oakland airport and flew back to Idaho Falls.

On October 7, 1986 we loaded the trailer with living essentials, two bicycles, and headed to California. Julie was beginning her second year at BYU, so it was just the two of us. Our new address was 1531 Calle Santiago, Pleasanton. It was a 930 sq ft townhouse with 2 bedrooms and 2 baths.

It was fun coming back to the area we lived from December 1965 until we moved to Richland the fall of 1971. Our old Livermore neighbors were still around and my aunt and uncle were still in Livermore.

I rented an office in the Sunset Office Plaza in Livermore. It was a few blocks from where we had lived. It was about four miles from Pleasanton. I purchased office furniture on the company, and I was in business.

I took vacation days in conjunction with Christmas 1986 and we drove to Idaho Falls. Everything was fine with the house and we enjoyed our visit.

On the way back to California we stopped at Lake Tahoe and skied Squaw Valley. It was good skiing, but too many people. Leaving Squaw Valley we hit a bad snowstorm that had traffic stopped for a couple of hours.

Loa and Max were expecting us that evening in Grass Valley. We had no way of letting them know, but they heard it on the news.

Julie enrolled in the 2nd semester at BYU Hawaii. We put her on the plane in San Francisco and away she went on a flight to Honolulu.

We flew over a couple of months later for a visit and see how she was doing. This would be our second visit to Hawaii within about four months.

Just after we arrived in Pleasanton we flew to Maui and spent a week with Max and Loa. They had been in Maui for a couple of weeks and had a rental car. They toured us around the island. We went to the Sheraton for Sunday brunch and ran into Loa and Max's neighbors when they lived in Walnut Creek. Small world.

It just so happened on this trip to see Julie that Bev and Tom were attending a corporate event in Honolulu.

They would be catching a plane home a couple of hours after we arrived. We had a great flight in first class and was on a roll when we deplaned in Honolulu.

Julie was there with a friend that gave her a ride to the airport. Tom and Bev was also at the gate to greet us. Julie introduced us to her friend, Matt, and he departed to go back to the campus.

We saw Bev and Tom off and picked up a rental car. We had a motel for two nights near the campus and then two nights at the Outrigger on Waikiki Beach.

The Polynesian Cultural Center was next to the campus. We spent an afternoon and evening with Julie touring the center and attending the performances. Julie knew a lot of the people working and performing. We didn't see Matt again.

When we checked in at the Outrigger for the last two days the desk clerk said our room was not ready. However, she would upgrade us to a one bedroom suite.

The suite was huge and on the corner with two balconys. The side balcony had a view of Diamondhead and the front balcony looked down and over Waikiki Beach. We really lucked out. However, it rained for two days.

LaRue's Idaho Falls bank friend, Carol and her husband, were also in Honolulu. They came by for a visit and were duly impressed.

When we got back to Pleasanton LaRue talked to Bev on the phone. They both had a feeling that Matt may become more than Julie's friend.

Big Change – 1987

The merger of Western Airlines into Delta Airlines was finalized on April 1, 1987. We would now be flying Delta. We noticed the first class service to Puerto Vallarta was not as good as Western Airlines but still good. We were on a flight to Puerto Vallarta in April and told the former Western flight attendant that we missed Western Airlines. She gave us a china coffee cup with the Western Airlines logo as they were phasing them out.

In early 1987 there was an important sales/marketing meeting at Headquarters. It was announced that Bob Robertson was gone and replaced with an ex IBM executive. We were dumfounded.

The new guy didn't come across well. His standard response to sales/marketing strategy questions was, "That dog don't hunt". In other words we didn't know anything.

My friends at EG&G Idaho let me know that approval had been granted to issue an RFP for a new computer to replace the Cyber 176. It was at full capacity and obsolete after nearly 8 years service. They were looking for a Cray class computer.

I considered my commitment to Bob Robertson, which was for a year in Livermore, no longer in effect since he was gone. With the procurement activity at the INEL and nothing happening in Livermore I decided we should return to Idaho Falls.

The rent on the townhouse in Pleasanton was month to month so that was not a problem. We packed up the trailer and departed Pleasanton on April 30, 1987, I left the Olds at the Oakland airport for whenever I was in the bay area. I would alternate weeks between Livermore and Idaho Falls.

EG&G issued the RFP for the new computer shortly after we got back to Idaho Falls. A tough benchmark demonstration would be required in the early fall.

The specifications were for a Cray class computer. My inside informants told me that it would be a problem as the budget was only \$3.5 million and a new Cray computer was over \$10 million.

This was good news for me as the ETA Piper air cooled system was to have the performance of a Cray-1 and would cost around \$1 million.

We should win easily if we could demonstrate good performance on the benchmark demonstration. That was a big if. The hardware was looking good but the operating system was in limbo.

The early decision to use the Control Data Cyber 205 operating system was not accepted by potential buyers and had recently been abandoned. This is exactly what we in the ETA sales force were saying from the beginning. UNIX was now being developed but it was another year away. We had essentially lost over two

years.

I could only hope that it all would come together in time for the benchmark demonstration. I had two analysts work on the benchmark all summer. They had to use a Cyber 205 as there was no working ETA model.

I worked with corporate proposal writers and we wrote the proposal. We were a couple of weeks from demonstration time, and we wouldn't make it. I had to cancel the demonstration and could not submit a proposal. I could only hope that the bids would be too high and be rejected with another try in the future.

My old friend, Chuck Breckinridge, who was the Control Data salesman when I was in Livermore, was the salesman for Cray on this procurement. Chuck did his homework and submitted a bid of \$3.5 million which was exactly what was in the budget.

Chuck knew how to get inside information also. It was the winning bid as no other vendor responded to the RFP. However, it was a used Cray-1 and obsolete. It was a disappointment for the guys at EG&G. But it was a Cray computer for the INEL.

The decision was driven by the computer center people. The user community was not on board with it. It was a problem that I would inherit. More on that later.

Our Life 1987-1988

We had Thanksgiving in 1987 for everyone in Idaho Falls. Mom and Dad came down from Salmon. Julie brought her boyfriend, Matt, and they came from Provo. Brian and Tina came from Boise, and Kathleen and Gary came from Twin Falls. In the course of the holiday everyone was getting along well as a family. We all went for a walk one evening and we are thinking this is probably the way the family is going to look. We had been expecting Brian and Tina would have an announcement to make as they had been together since college.

We were all sitting around in the family room after dinner. I thought I would make an announcement that maybe would speed things up. I announced that whoever gets married first gets two first class tickets to Puerto Vallarta and a week at the Villa del Mar condo. Nobody said a word. I guess it didn't go over well, as I heard about it later.

Engagements

It was not long after and I was staying at the Sheraton Pleasanton while doing sales work in Livermore. I was back from my morning run and cooling off in the recliner and the phone rang. That was unusual at 7am .

I was apprehensive about answering. It was Matt Redd and he asked for my permission to marry Julie. What a surprise that was. Of course, I gave permission.

Days later I got another call. Gary Slette asked for permission to marry Kathleen.

Brian finally got the hint and proposed to Tina.

All three of our kids planned weddings starting in May 1988 within a span of five weeks.

I had enough airline frequent flyer miles and bonus weeks for our condo in Puerto Vallarta to accommodate everyone . Within a week I had first class flight reservations and resort reservations for all. It was amazing how it worked out. We put all three engagements in the same Sunday paper. That caused a stir among our friends. We couldn't believe it either.

1988 Weddings

Three weddings in five weeks was a great experience. Matt and Julie were first.

The day before the wedding Matt's parents hosted a luncheon at the Westbank.

They were married the next day in the Idaho Falls Temple May 7, 1988. We had a reception later at the Elks Lodge with food, refreshments, and dancing. They departed Idaho Falls the next morning for their week at the Villa del Mar in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

Gary and Kathleen's wedding was next in Twin Falls and they did all the wedding arrangements. Gary's brother worked for Winnebago and drove the Slette's out from Minnesota in a Winnebago motor home. We took our trailer and stayed at the KOA Campground on Highway 93.

My folks were supposed to be at the wedding, but Dad was having a health problem and they couldn't make it.

The evening before the wedding there was a catered dinner at the Turf Club. The wedding ceremony June 11, 1988 was in a beautiful open area of the Blue Lakes Country Club at the bottom of the Snake River canyon.

A reception followed at their house where they had two large tents erected in the side yard. It was a great reception with food, refreshments, and music. Gary's sheep rancher friend had a grill going and grilled lamb all afternoon.

Later in the day a few people jumped in the swimming pool clothes and all. The next morning was a hosted breakfast at the Depot Grill. Gary and Kathleen's trip to Puerto Vallarta was scheduled the week following Brian and Tina's wedding the next week.

We wrapped up the wedding in Twin Falls and hooked up the trailer and moved to the KOA Campground in Ketchum. We were in site #16 for \$14.99 per night. The folks were able to come and stayed in site #17 in their Alpenlite 5th wheel.

We hosted a catered BBQ by Mutt's of Ketchum at the Hailey park.

Brian and Tina were married June 18, 1988 in the Hailey Catholic church. A reception was held at a wedding reception center with the food and refreshments provided by Louie's Italian Restaurant of Ketchum. Louie was a long time family friend and catered the gourmet food in person.

Tina's father, Joe Macarillo, was a musician and his trio played the main dining room at the Sun Valley Lodge. Joe was the 2nd generation of the trio performing at the lodge. His partner on the piano was Joe Foss. He played throughout the reception. It was a great reception.

Gary and Kathleen departed the next day for their week in Puerto Vallarta. Brian and Tina went a week later, and they overlapped one night in our two bedroom condo at the Villa del Mar.

The Slette family hosted a reception in Minnesota for Kathleen and Gary after they returned from Puerto Vallarta.

I had enough air miles, hotel, and rental car credits to cover the trip for them and for us. We flew first class to Minneapolis, picked up a Hertz rental car, and stayed overnight at the Sheraton Midway in St. Paul.

The next day we drove to Walter in the southern end of the state. It was good to see where Gary was born and raised on the family farm. They had a very nice reception in their church meeting hall.

The weddings and honeymoons to Puerto Vallarta came off without a hitch. It was a summer to remember.

1988 Job Happenings

The summer of 1988 all sales and marketing people were summoned to Headquarters for an announcement.

The announcement was earth shattering. All ETA sales and marketing people were being transferred to Control Data.

ETA systems would only design and manufacture computers. I was devastated as I didn't want to work for Control Data again. I told the new management that when I left Control Data I was not eligible for rehire. They hurried off to check it out.

They came back that everything was fine. I was now a Control Data employee and would report to the sales office in Sunnyvale, California. I hoped all along that I would be rejected. However, I was still employed, and it gave me time to plan an exit. I was not going to work for Control Data.

(Note Control Data closed the doors on ETA Systems in April 17, 1989. A few systems had shipped with limited success. The remaining inventory was given to universities for research.*

Control Data was out of the computer business and defunct by 1992.)

Former ETA sales and marketing now had the task of training a large number of Control Data people. I gave a sales training class and my old nemesis, Walt Chase, who was my boss at CERN, was in the class. Walt was now a salesman in New Hampshire, and I was his trainer. I enjoyed the role reversal. We talked at coffee breaks a few times but not about what happened at CERN.

Following my return to Pleasanton I checked in with the Control Data Sunnyvale office. My new boss was Brian Jones, who I had never met. He was in his late 20's with very little experience.

It didn't matter since his father was Boyd Jones, who had been the Western Region Sales Manager. He retired and had evidently set his son up.

I was advised that the ETA sales offices would be closed when the leases were up. I could work out of my Livermore office until the end of the lease in October, 1988. Then I would have to work out of the CDC office in Sunnyvale.

I decided to find a job with EG&G in Idaho Falls. It wouldn't be easy as my old boss, Dick French, was no longer there.

I asked my friend, Ron Raymond, to check around. He came back later with an internal job posting. It was for a sales and marketing oriented person in the newly formed Technology Transfer Office. The mission was to license technology developed at the INEL with the private sector and collect royalties. The job was to be filled from within EG&G.

Ron talked to the manager, Jane Welch, and told her I was a good fit and interested in the job. We eventually connected by telephone. Jane said she would see what she could do after the posting period was over. She could hire from outside if not satisfied with the internal applicants. The General Manager, Jim Zane, would have to sign off on it. I had good rapport with Jim, and thought I had a good chance if it got that far.

I met in person with Jane Welch. As soon as the required job posting was satisfied she would go through the approval process of getting me hired.

Jim Zane signed off. I received a job offer and accepted. I would start with EG&G mid August, 1988. I gave two weeks notice to Control Data.

(Cheis Christopherson resigned and joined his old boss, Tom Odle. Tom was now the sales manager of a company selling plug compatible peripheral equipment for IBM computers. This allowed Chris to continue living in Idaho Falls. Things eventually soured and he went on his own selling personal computers out of a small office downtown. He had no experience with PC's but he tried. Chris and Diane divorced and he went to live with his brother in Ohio. He passed away in August, 2017 at the age of 83.)

The New Job

The Technology Transfer Office mission was to transfer INEL patented technology under a licensing agreement to the private sector. The inventor of the technology would get a percentage of the royalties.

Initially it was Jane Welch, me, and our secretary Carla. Jane was about 30, had a PHd in Physics, knew what she was doing, and great to work for. Her husband was also a PHd scientist with EG&G.

Carla and Jane both had PC's which were still a relatively new tool at EG&G. An order was put in for my PC. When it was installed it was the latest and newest IBM PS2. Carla remarked that I must know somebody. In fact, I did. The PC was installed by the people that had worked for me in the computer center.

I never wanted a PC at home. Christmas 1988 LaRue splurged and bought me a Packard Bell 500. It consisted of a small black and white monitor, the computer, and a dot matrix printer. The software was MS-DOS and a compiler called BASIC. The speed was 16MHZ. If it didn't work correctly it was switchable to 8MHZ. The cost was \$2,500.

Technology Transfer

There were over 50 technologies submitted to our office for evaluation and potential licensing. Most were a long shot.

We were a small office, so we prioritized a list of 10 with the most potential. We worked with graphics design to come up with a poster presentation of each technology. They were designed for display in a booth at tradeshow and technology transfer meetings with industry.

Bryant Hafen was hired straight from serving in the Air Force as a 1Lt. He was a graduate of BYU in chemical engineering. He met and married a girl while at BYU who was from Salmon. It turns out she was the daughter of my high school classmate, Dean Stokes . Bryant and I became good friends and worked well together.

The first trade show I worked was at the Jacob Javits Center in New York. I sat up the booth and manned it by myself for a week. I also gave a talk in the auditorium to a large audience. New York was scary in those days with a lot of crime.

I would walk from my hotel near Times Square to the Jacob Javits Center. The

hotel bellman warned me about walking alone.

One of the first mornings I was up early for a run and headed to Central Park about four or five blocks away. I was enjoying the run in Central Park when I realized I was all alone in a deserted area. I got out of there fast and back to where there were people.

In October, 1989 there was a Technology Transfer symposium for DOE labs in Mystic, Connecticut. Jane and I would represent the INEL. She was from New Haven, Connecticut and was taking her young daughter along to visit grandma and grandpa. We flew to New Haven and I got a rental car to drive to Mystic. Jane would stay with her folks and go back and forth to Mystic.

It was World Series time and the Oakland A's were playing the San Francisco Giants. It was October 17 and the fourth game was in San Francisco. I found a nice sports bar and was all excited for the game to start as I was a huge A's fan. The TV went funny and there was no picture. Then we discovered there was a major earthquake in the Bay Area.

The Navy was the host one evening at the Groton nuclear submarine base. We were given a guided tour of the first nuclear submarine, the Nautilus. It was especially interesting as I knew Frank Fogarty at EG&G. He was a retired Navy Captain and the commander of the Nautilus for several years. There was a bronze plaque on the bulkhead with his name on it.

On our return flight I was reading the book, "The Hunt for Red October". We landed in Salt Lake and I had plenty of time to get to the gate for the flight to Idaho Falls. I was into the book and sat down to keep reading after we deplaned.

Jane and her daughter continued on to the next gate. I read for a while and proceeded to the next concourse for my flight. I got there and there was nobody there. I had missed my flight. LaRue was meeting our flight in Idaho Falls and there was no Harry. She talked to Jane and she said I got off the plane behind her in Salt Lake and didn't know where I was. I had to get a hotel room for the night.

It was embarrassing Monday morning explaining to Jane what happened. I was the seasoned traveler and the one to mess up while traveling with my new boss.

Two of the inventions I liked the most were the centrifugal contactor and the device that turned organic garbage into fuel pellets.

The inventor of the garbage device had a prototype installed on a trial basis with the garbage company in Thief River Falls, Minnesota. It had been there for several months. He asked me to accompany him on a visit to talk about their experience and a possible license agreement. He would be on another trip, and we would meet in Minneapolis, and drive up to Thief River Falls.

I arranged to arrive Sunday night so I could visit ETA Systems and old friends before I picked him up.

Shutdown of ETA Systems

Monday morning April 17, 1989 I arrived at the ETA Systems parking lot. There were no cars in the lot,

I could see a sign posted on the front door. It directed all employees to go to a meeting at an auditorium.

I found a phone and called the home phone of a friend that worked at ETA. He was home and said the meeting announced the closure of ETA Systems. All employees were terminated. It was as a complete surprise.

What a shock that was and what a coincidence that I was in town the day it happened. It was about nine months after I departed.

Turning Garbage Into Fuel Pellets

I met my travel companion and we drove north to Thief River Falls. It was a small town. The best place to eat was the bowling alley next to our hotel.

We watched garbage being separated and fed on a conveyor to the pellet making machine. My coat smelled like garbage the rest of the trip.

The machine worked well and produced fuel pellets for the furnace at a school.

They wanted more time to evaluate the machine and we put the license agreement on hold.

Cleaning Up Oil Spills

The centrifugal contactor was my favorite. It had huge potential for cleaning up oil spills in the ocean.

It utilized centrifugal force to separate oil from water and was about the size of a 50 gallon drum. It sucked in contaminated water, spun it at high speed, pumped clean water out, and pumped oil to the tender. It was small and relatively affordable so that any number could be utilized to clean an oil spill.

Charles Taggert was an investor and businessman in Salt Lake. He was with the large construction company, Taggert Construction and wanted an exclusive license for the technology.

First, we had to determine if it could be built in quantity. We found a company in Ogden with expertise in stainless steel fabrication who NASA contracts for special projects. They determined they could build it.

I negotiated an exclusive license with a performance guarantee that Taggert had to meet in one year. He didn't live up to the terms of the contract and it was back on the market for licensing.

I read years later that an environmental group fronted by the actor, Kevin Costner, was promoting it. However, the centrifugal contactor never found acceptance.

Family Life

Kathleen, Brian, and Julie were all married in 1988. Nearly three years had gone by and there were no grandchildren. Then in early 1991 Julie announced she was expecting and then Tina announced she was expecting also. The due dates were early November.

We went to Puerto Vallarta the last week of October for a week in our timeshare at Villa del Mar. We flew home on November 2 and had a stopover in Los Angeles. LaRue made a quick phone call between flights in Los Angeles to see if there was any news. She reached Tina and she said nothing was happening there.

Grandchildren At Last

We landed in Salt Lake and as we taxied to the gate we could see people with banners in the concourse.

In those days greeters could be at the gate. It was common to see people with banners meeting returned missionaries.

We were in the first row of first class and the first off the plane. We saw banners with, "it's a boy". Then we saw Matt, Kathleen and Gary. The people behind us could barely get by us.

We found out later that Tina knew that Jake had been born but withheld telling us as she didn't want to ruin the surprise.

We didn't board our flight to Idaho Falls . We went to Logan to see the new baby Jake born on November 2, 1991.

Brian and Tina moved to Portland and Haley was born November 15, 1991.

Christopher Slette was born in Twin Falls on May 31, 1991. Caitlin Slette was born in Twin Falls on April 24, 1994.

On July 1, 1993 Taylor Redd was born in Logan, Utah. We towed the trailer down and parked in front of Matt and Julie's trailer in the USU trailer park. LaRue stayed for a week, and I went back to Idaho Falls to work.

Lake Powell

Our friends, Kay and Layman Lott, had a timeshare week on a houseboat on Lake Powell. It was a large houseboat and expensive to operate. We were invited to share gas expense.

A week on a houseboat on Lake Powell is a great experience that we enjoyed on four different trips.

We got on the houseboat at Bullfrog Marina and had our favorite canyons to overnight in.

One memory is getting overrun with mice. It was just Kay and Layman and us. We anchored for the night and had our gangplank out. After dinner we went up on top to look at the stars and watch for satellites going over.

When we went down there were mice running around everywhere. We grabbed

brooms and whacked away. We learned a lesson. Always pull the gangplank in the evening.

Management Changes

I worked for Jane Welch about a year. Then she was promoted to a higher level position.

As soon as she was gone a new hire was brought in. He was Jack Peterson, the former President of the Idaho Mining Association. He knew nothing about technology transfer, but supposedly had high level contacts in industry.

I tried to talk to him about mining, but he didn't have much to say.

He was always traveling. He was supposed to move to Idaho Falls, but he figured since he traveled all the time, it was just as easy to fly out of Boise.

He called from Boise and said he needed to get to Idaho Falls in a hurry to pick up travel advance money and plane tickets for his next trip. He would be speeding and asked me to call the Idaho State Police for a police escort! That was too much to believe. I let it go in one ear and out the other.

We hardly ever saw Jack and there was no management direction from him. He even missed giving our performance reviews.

I had enough of Jack after six months and went to Jim Zane. Apparently, Jim Zane had enough also and fired Jack.

I was made acting manager of Technology Transfer. However, we were to report to Dick Rice in Engineering Services.

I viewed it as out of sight out of mind. I knew Dick and didn't think much of him. We went back to 1973 when we all arrived in Idaho Falls and socialized in Newcomers Club. Kathleen babysat for Dick and his wife. Dick divorced his wife and hooked up with a gal on the fast track up the ladder at EG&G.

Dick was the mysterious type. You never knew what he was thinking. We both reported to Dick French a few years back and mostly disagreed on things.

His idea of a weekly staff meeting was to go through his stack of mail and read it

to us.

Three or four months went by. Dick Rice called a meeting to announce the new manager of the Technology Transfer Office. I was the acting manager and might be in the running. I figured it would be a PHd scientist, like Jane Welch.

He named a young guy who was a friend and golf buddy. He had no degree or technical experience. I was stunned and so was Carla and Bryant.

The new guy brought in his buddy that didn't have a degree or experience. Also, a secretary to replace Carla. Carla was a big loss as she had been in the Technology Transfer Office since the beginning and new the ropes. Bryant and I were the outcasts in the office.

Job Change - 1990

I began to look around EG&G for an alternative. The DOE had recently asked the weapons labs to design a facility for producing tritium for nuclear weapons, as it was in short supply. It was called the New Production Reactor, and the labs would compete for it.

The EG&G design was for small modular high temperature gas cooled reactors (MHTGR). Our desert was the space to build as many small reactors as needed.

A few large gas cooled reactors were in operation and could provide valuable data on the reliability of components. A job was posted for a technology transfer person to facilitate technology transfer from the existing reactors. I interviewed and was accepted since I had technology transfer experience as well as computer skills. I joined the NPR Program in June, 1990.

Soon after I left the Technology Transfer Office Bryant Hafen also departed. He opened a State Farm Insurance office on North Broadway. It was a strange switch in occupation. His father-in-law, Dean Stokes in Salmon was with State Farm, and his motivation. We remained in touch for several years and Bryant did very well.

The EG&G NPR Program consisted of about 80 nuclear reactor experts. They were a pleasure to be associated with. My boss was a former Navy officer in charge of the nuclear reactor on tsubmarines. He had great stories about life on a nuclear submarine.

We visited General Atomic in La Jolla, California a couple of times. They designed and constructed gas cooled reactors and were a wealth of knowledge. La Jolla was a nice place to visit also.

Visiting Nuclear Reactors

We visited reactors in South Carolina and Colorado. The South Carolina reactor was on the southern border with Georgia.

We flew to Atlanta then to Augusta on a small plane. We got a treat in Augusta as we circled low over the Augusta golf course, the site of the Masters. We stayed in Augusta and drove to the reactor site and meetings with the operators.

We had dinner one evening at the Green Jacket restaurant located outside the main entrance of the golf course. There was a treasure trove of golf memorabilia on display.

The Colorado reactor was about 30 miles north of Denver. We arrived in the morning and found the road blocked. People in black were running around with guns..

We thought we might be in the middle of a gun fight. It turned out to be a surprise drill for a terrorist attack. We had to watch and wait for the exercise to end.

We checked in and met with our hosts. Then we all proceeded through rigid screening and security to enter the reactor area.

The reactor was shut down for decommissioning, so we were allowed access to formerly closed and restricted areas. It was confining and spooky. When we went through exit screening we set off alarms. We registered radioactive and couldn't exit.

We were escorted to a room for more checks and to sit and wait. The health physics people explained that suits with polyester attract radiation. After an hour or so the reading should be normal, and it was. We were glad to get out of there. I can't say I liked the place.

Gathering Reactor Failure Data

My job was to look at component failures so that mistakes would not be repeated

in our design.

Every failure in a nuclear reactor had to be reported to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). It was done on paper and the volume was such that it was transferred to rolls of microfilm. It was impossible to gather and compare failure data.

I talked to the person in charge of the microfilm and discovered there was a way to scan and digitize it. It could then be transferred to media that a computer could read.

I asked for a few rolls to be transferred to diskettes. I would figure out a way to read them and do something with it.

Maybe I could write a program for PC's . There was BASIC, but it was not on my work PC. I didn't know BASIC, but it looked sort of like FORTRAN. My Packard Bell PC had BASIC installed. I copied it and brought it to work along with the programming manual.

I hadn't written a program in about fifteen years. The task at hand was similar to what I had done in the past. I would read in a line of the failure report from the diskette and string characters together looking for key identifiers. When a match was found I would write the pertinent data to a file for processing later.

The program was complicated. Through trial and error I eventually got what I was looking for.

Now the data had to go into a database, but I had no database software. There was new database software called ORACLE that ran on mainframes as well as PC's. It was expensive and I couldn't justify the cost for an experiment. I knew a scientist in the next building that had acquired ORACLE for his project. I talked to him to see how he liked it.

It turns out his project fell through and he was not using it. I could borrow it and give it a try. I learned ORACLE and was able to load my data into a database

Now I could type in a simple query of the database and get all occurrences of any pump, switch, component, or any key word. It was just what we needed. Now I had to get all the failure data pertaining to gas cooled reactors. I got boxes of diskettes from the NRC with the data. It took about eight hours to process a single

diskette. That wiped out my PC for the day. I took diskettes home and let my PC crank away. It was against the rules to do company work on home PC's, but I did it anyway. I got the job done and we had a fantastic tool.

As time progressed it looked more and more favorable that we would win the NPR contract. We were feeling confident when it rolled around to Christmas 1991.

Our boss was called to DOE Headquarters for a meeting. We speculated that it was the announcement we were looking for.

He came back and called a meeting the afternoon of the last working day before the Christmas break. The announcement was that the NPR Program was cancelled.

Then we were told that when we return from the holiday we could expect termination notices. It made for a tough Christmas.

My NPR Job Ends

We returned to work and were given 30 day notice. We were free to look for jobs within EG&G. Too many engineers and scientists were looking for jobs.

My only hope was to go back to the computer center and work for Bob Scott. He replaced me when I went to Floating Point Systems.

However, Bob was under the gun. He was overstaffed, over budget, and the user community was drifting away from using the Cray. There was a move underway to get rid of it and use small department size mini computers.

Mom and Dad at this same stage in life bought the Motel Deluxe in Salmon. It worked well for them. I began to look at motels as an option.

They had spent some winters in Overton, Nevada and liked the area. We liked the area also when we lived in Las Vegas. I called a realtor to see if anything was available in the area. His mother owned and operated the Overton Motel and due to her age she was thinking of selling.

I took a couple of days off and drove down. The Overton Motel had 22 units, decent curb appeal, large living quarters, and there was only one other small hotel in town. The rooms needed a lot of work. It was something I could handle.

The old gal wanted to sell and her asking price was reasonable. However, she could not face up to it. So much for that. If she would have agreed we would have been in the motel business.

I was down to the least week of the 30 day notice and I would be out of work on February 1, 1992.

New Job at EG&G

Bob Scott dropped by and said he had gotten approval to bring me on board in the computer center if I was interested.

My job would be to work with the user community and save the Cray-1 from being declared surplus and removed. It was a job and I accepted.

Change in RV's – 1992

Mom and Dad had an older Prowler 5th wheel. They sold it and bought a new high end 1987 26ft Alpenlite 5th wheel in 1987. They towed it to Overton/Logandale, Nevada a couple of winters and to Parker, Arizona a couple of winters.

They couldn't go anymore due to Dad's health. It sat idle in Salmon for about a year. They decided to sell the Alpenlite and the 1978 Ford F250 extended cab. They would give us a great deal at \$7,500 for the Alpenlite, and \$2,500 for the truck.

We were happy with our 1978 Security trailer and 1986 Suburban and really didn't want a 5th wheel and a 14 year old truck. However, the price was too good to pass up. We listed the Security trailer for sale, and it sold quickly for \$5,200.

We went to Salmon and o andhooked up the 5th wheel and truck to head home to Idaho Falls. Dad wanted to make sure I knew how to put gas in the truck and how to check the tires before we departed.

Then he decided he should ride as far as Leadore with me. Mom followed in their car and LaRue in our car.

There was a head wind and I could see the gas gauge going down as I drove. The truck had dual gas tanks and I was barely halfway to Idaho Falls and had to switch tanks.

Dad had always bragged about the great gas mileage he got with the truck. I wasn't seeing it. The engine was a big 460 cubic inch V8 and it was really going through the gas. When I filled up in Idaho Falls the average was 5.9 mpg from Salmon to Idaho Falls.

On May 21 we hooked up and went to Island Park for the Memorial Day weekend. Gary, Kathleen, and Christopher joined us. Then on May 29 we went to Stoddard Creek Campground near Spencer, Idaho. I decided the 1978 truck was too old for reliable towing.

I listed the truck for \$3,700 in the Idaho Falls paper and it sold within a week. The guy that bought it was Butch Claunch from Salmon and owned the rv park. LaRue remembered him in high school.

He didn't dicker on the price and wrote a check that was good. I saw the truck around Salmon for years. Mom and Dad was not too happy about me selling the truck so quickly, and at a \$1,200 profit. I then listed our 1986 Suburban and sold it for \$9,700 to a guy that worked at EG&G.

I looked at new trucks and settled on a white 1992 ¾ ton Chevrolet extended cab with the 454 V8 engine. The price was \$21,750.

Dad's Health and Death - 1993

For the 1993 Memorial Day holiday we went to Downata Hot Springs south of Downey, Idaho.

Gary, Kathleen, and Christopher were already there with their new trailer, and we parked next to them. Matt, Julie, and Jake came and set up their tent in the grass area behind us.

The next morning I was paged over the loudspeaker that I had a phone call. I ran to the office fearing what it might be. It was Roy Bisson on the phone. Dad had a cardiac arrest that morning in Missoula. They had gone to Missoula for doctor's appointments and were having breakfast before returning to Salmon. Dad keeled over and luckily two football coaches were in the restaurant. They gave him cpr. until paramedics arrived and took him to St Patricks hospital.

LaRue and I packed up and departed via Idaho Falls to Butte and across to

Missoula. We knew the hospital well as Mom had colon surgery and Dad had a heart valve replaced there.

We went straight to the front desk fearing the worst news possible. Dad was ok for the time being. The pig heart valve that was put in two or three years before had calcified and quit working. It could not be replaced and could quit at any time.

The hospital let us park the trailer for two nights in the back parking lot,. Gary and Gladys, and Beverly and Tom arrived.

We had a mini reunion and BBQ the next evening in the parking lot. We returned to Idaho Falls on May 31, 1993.

I was at work the morning of August 27, 1993 and I got a call from Bumpy. She had gone on a morning walk with Mom. When they got back Dad was dead in his chair.

We took off for Salmon and arrived in the early afternoon. They didn't have burial plots, so Mom sent us to City Hall to purchase two plots. After we purchased them the clerk said the price would be going up. We purchased two adjacent plots for ourselves at \$200 per plot.

I gave a talk at Dad's funeral. I was relating stories and started on the one about Dad and Bus Miller winning the Patterson Rod and Gun Club prize for the largest trout in the 1950's. Nobody knew that the fish was obtained illegally.

They were fishing in the Boulder Chain Lakes in the White Clouds They saw this huge trout that wouldn't bite anything. They shot it in the back of the head with a 22. The bullet hole was not visible. It weighed eight pounds, so they entered it in the contest and won.

I started telling the story and Bus Miller blurted out, "You can't tell that story". I said the statute of limitations has expired and went on with it. His reaction was funny after all those years.

After Dad passed away Mom didn't want to stay in the duplex they had been renting. Ray and Little Ray were building duplex townhouses further up the bar. Mom bought the one at 714 Taft Avenue.

The duplexes are on the property that LaRue's parents had owned. Mom's living

room window looked across the driveway to where LaRue's bedroom window was. A huge willow tree was still there. We remember it when it was a small willow tree. The concrete front porch and steps were all that remained of their old house. They were removed later.

New Job 1992-1995

Saving the Cray computer would not be an easy job. The users wanted it gone and replaced with small computers that they could control. It was also obsolete and expensive to maintain. I needed to look at newer technology to replace it.

The Cray salesman was my old friend, Chuck Breckinridge, who I worked with in Livermore when I joined Control Data. He was based in southern California and would come to Idaho Falls a couple of times a year. LaRue and I would have dinner with him.

In late 1994 I got a call from Chuck. He had left Cray Research and had gone with Seymore Cray and his new company, Cray Computing, in Colorado Springs. Chuck was the VP of Sales and he invited me for a preview of Seymore's latest design, the Cray-4.

In my job I needed to be aware of new computer development and had recently been to IBM in New York, Cray Research in Minnesota, and Convex in Texas. I set up a trip to Cray Computer in Colorado Springs.

I met Chuck for dinner when I got to Colorado Spring. Bob Cox was with him. I knew Bob as I worked for him at EG&G in 1979 after I transferred into the computer center. He had joined EG&G from Colorado and then went back to Colorado. He was now in sales and marketing at Cray Computer. What a surprise that was.

Chuck and Bob toured me through the facility the next morning and introduced me to people. It was impressive and state of the art. The Cray-4 was coming along nicely.

A catered box lunch was delivered and we sat around to visit and have lunch. To my surprise Seymore Cray joined us. This was totally out of character for Seymore.

I had worked in his Chippewa Falls lab back in the 1970's and knew him to be

reclusive and not one to visit. We visited a while and he excused himself as he had an obligation that he needed to drive to. We walked him to his jeep and he departed.

Before the day was over Chuck offered me a job with Cray Computing. I was stunned. It was a job offer but it was contingent upon a new round of financing that was in the works. He didn't know how long it would take and it was a standing offer.

Major Change at the INEL

The end date for the EG&G five year contract for operating the INEL was the end of the fiscal year October 31, 1994. The Department of Energy had automatically renewed the contract four times previously, but not this time. It would be open for competitive bids.

Late summer 1994 it was announced that Lockheed Martin would be the new operating contractor. It was ironic that EG&G had replaced Lockheed Martin at Cape Canaveral a few years earlier.

Key Lockheed Martin managers arrived in September 1994 to begin the transition.

On November 1 nearly all EG&G managers were replaced with Lockheed Martin managers that were transferred from other locations. It appeared to me they were not the cream of the crop. I now worked in something called network computing under a manager of dubious qualifications.

My orders were to get rid of the Cray. Any work now being run on the Cray must be directed to the Lockheed Martin owned Cray computer in Denver. It didn't look legal to me, but that is the way it was.

There were too many former EG&G managers around with little to do. An early retirement option was announced near the end of the year. It offered severance pay based on years worked and five years added to your age for retirement benefit with six months compensation.

I opted for early retirement effective January 25, 1995. I was hoping the round of financing for Cray Computing would come through and I could go there. It never happened.

(Note Seymour Cray's round of financing did not come through. He was killed in a car accident about a year after I retired. That spelled the end of Cray Computing.*

Lockheed Martin did not do well operating the INEL. They were replaced at the end of their five year contract by Battelle Northwest.)

End of chapter 10