

Werner Wilhelm

His life in story and picture

1928–1993

Part 3

Werner's Middle Years



Dr Kurt Diebl



Astrid Diebl



Astrid Diebl in Heidelberg

Astrid answered an ad in her father's medical journal placed by a fellow doctor seeking a wife, hopefully the daughter of a doctor. She met Dr. Kurt Diebl in Heidelberg where she was attending the University of Heidelberg. Astrid was very excited and told her brother Werner that she was about to meet a man named Dr. Kurt Diebl, aged 36 and that he looked like Werner and sounded like a real nice man. Werner gave his little sister \$100, a large sum in those days, in order to buy a real nice dress so she would look really nice and thus "catch" Kurt in Heidelberg.

Ever since Astrid was a very young girl she had always said she was going to only marry a man that was like her brother Werner. When she corresponded with Kurt in answer to his ad he sent pictures of himself along with his letter. Astrid showed these pictures to her mother, then she sent a picture of Kurt to Werner and his mother in Dearborn and asked their opinion of him. The last to know of this potential match was Vati as they knew that he would be very critical. Werner and Mama Martha looked over the pictures of Kurt and then they wrote to Vati, telling him about Kurt and stating that they gave Kurt the "green light" for Astrid to marry him. As with everything in life, all great decisions, including Astrid's choice of a life partner were discussed with all parents and with Werner.

The first meeting went very well, they both fell in love with one another. Then in May, 1964 Astrid and Kurt went on a little excursion to Salzburg, Austria to celebrate their coming marriage. They drank coffee in Café "Glockenspiel" on the balcony with an outstanding view of the castle and the cathedral.



Dr Werner Wilhelm & Dr Kurt Diebl

In 1964 Werner was told by Astrid that she was marrying Dr. Diebl. Werner met him and had an instant respect and like for Kurt Diebl. He appeared to be a very fine, upright person. He has a fabulous personality and almost everyone feels an instant rapport with him. But Werner knew that when Kurt met his father there was going to be trouble in Paradise for several reasons. First of all Dr. Diebl was born in Czechoslovakia, and that would definitely drive Dr Wilhelm wild for her wanted his daughter to marry only a bonafide German man. Secondly, Dr Diebl was in his late 30's and had hardly a penny saved as he allowed his family and his office help to siphon off much of his hard earned money. Thirdly, Dr. Diebl was a Catholic, and that did not set at all well

with ultra Protestant Dr. Wilhelm, who if the bald truth be known, was a dyed in the wool atheist who used the facade of Protestantism because he was raised in the Naumburger Dom, a Lutheran church. Fourthly, and this really ate at Dr. Wilhelm, Kurt chose to locate in Bavaria, an area Dr. Wilhelm and other Prussian Germans considered to be the hillbilly portion of Germany, and he intended Astrid to live there with him! Impossible! A Protestant Prussian living in Bavaria! (Astrid never did fit in there for that very reason, and the residents of the town always felt that Astrid was looking down her nose at them, which indeed, she was.) Kurt's parents were not professional, another reason for Dr. Wilhelm to feel that his daughter was marrying beneath her class.



Astrid Wilhelm & Dr Kurt Diebl



Astrid & Kurt Diebl

But marry him she did. In spite of the fact that the night before the wedding Mutti got a hold of the office keys, went downstairs and fleeced Dr. Diebl's private locked drawers, came across the breach of promise lawsuit filed by Melanie, his girlfriend before he met Astrid through an ad in the medical journal. Mutti came up waiving this lawsuit and told Astrid to pack back up, they are going back home that very night. Astrid told them very meekly, that she thought not, that she loved Kurt and that she wanted to marry him. What a way for the marriage to start out!



Astrid



Astrid



Kurt Diebl



Astrid



Astrid

Kurt and Astrid went on a fairy tale honeymoon to the Italian Riviera and then they came back to Alt Oetting and set in earnest to build up his practice. Dr. Wilhelm made them promise not to have any children for at least 5 years to get the practice on its feet first. Well, that promise lasted just about 6 weeks, when Astrid noticed that her period never seemed to come that month, and in fact didn't come for another 9 months. Astrid was beside herself with fear of her father. But we promised Vati! she wailed at Kurt. Maybe I should get an abortion. This is one of the few times Kurt stood up to Dr. Wilhelm, telling Astrid they were not going to kill his son. As Christmas approached, Astrid was in fits for they were going to Kassel for the holidays, and there was just no hiding a pregnancy 5 months along. Oh, what is Vati going to say! Astrid was scared to death. She almost died of fright as she entered her parents' apartment in Kassel. When Dr Wilhelm saw that the baby was on the way he was very mellow and very pleased about it. Astrid almost died of relief!



Kurt Werner



Kurt & Werner



Dr Wilhelm & Werner



Wernerli



Wernerli

In April Werner was told the baby was due any day. He then got an announcement in the first weeks of May telling him he was the uncle of a healthy male child, named Kurt-Werner Diebl. Werner was upset with their use of the name Werner for he felt that the child was encroaching on his territory by taking his name. Werner was very much more upset when 5 or 6 years later they started calling this child Werner instead of Kurt Werner.



Werner Wilhelm II



Astrid & Dr Werner Diebl

Werner had a real problem with the birth of this child for he felt that this new born infant was taking his place in his father's affections. This was true in a way as the father felt that this was sort of his second chance for a male child to become a doctor and follow in his footsteps, which Wernerli has ended up accomplishing. When Wernerli talked to Werner about going to Dr Wilhelm's grave and telling the doctor that he was now a doctor too and that he bet the grandfather was real proud of him, that just wasn't the right thing to say to him, for it just confirmed Werner's fears that the kid was going to take over his place in his father's affections.

Werner was a proxy godfather to Kurt Werner at his christening. Werner had very mixed feelings about doing this as he was very jealous of that child and really wanted nothing to do with him. The poor kid was on the outs with his uncle all the days of his life for reasons that had nothing to do with him. It was simply the place he occupied in the family that caused all the trouble.



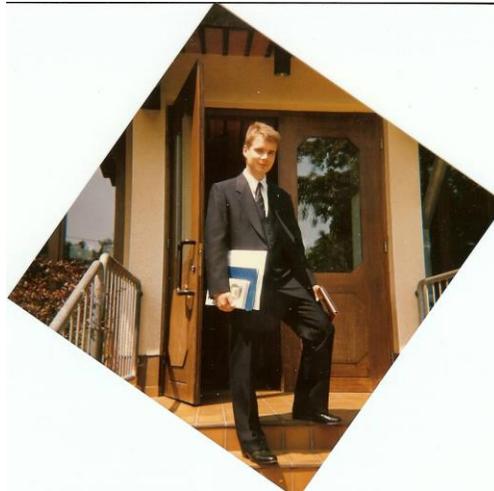
Charlotte Wilhelm & Werner Diebl

After the christening, Dr Wilhelm and Charlotte took the child home with them to Kassel, saying that the Diebl couple had to concentrate on building up the practice and had no time to care for an infant. The Diebls were not given a say in the matter, the Wilhelms simply steamrolled right over the Diebls. The Wilhelms would bring the child to Muhldorf for brief visits with the parents, but the child did not know the Diebls hardly at all and would scream his head off until the Wilhelms

took him in their arms and comforted him. For the longest time the child thought Astrid was his sister, and to this day he calls her "Assi". The Wilhelms kept the child until October of 1970 when Dr Wilhelm dropped dead on the sidewalk in downtown Kassel while looking in a jewelry shop window admiring the fine porcelain. The child then came back to the Diebls, then was promptly sent off to a boarding school where he spent the majority of his childhood years, coming home briefly on vacations and holidays. Werner used to visit the child on occasion at the boarding school if it was not too far from Astrid's house before I came into the family, but once I was there we had never visited Wernerli. On a few rare occasions, and only for a day or two, the child would be at home when we came to visit. The child had a hard time relating to his Uncle Werner so Werner felt that Astrid would talk bad about us to the child and so he could never look us in the face because of what his mother had said to him.

Once in a great while Werner would send a birthday card, and even less frequently, would send Wernerli a little money or a gold coin. Werner was never, ever close to his nephew, and as I stated earlier it was not because of anything the boy said or did, it was because of the politics of the family. Werner felt that the boy replaced him in his parents', but most especially, his father's affection, and he never got over that hurt.

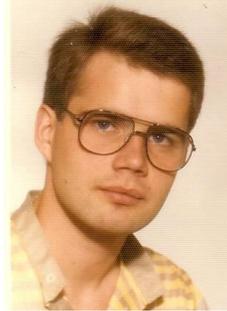
Astrid was very diligent in seeing that their son had the best possible education, however. She attended many conferences and gave very serious thought to how to improve her son's academic performance, which often left something to be desired. She switched his boarding schools many times when she thought it was to his best advantage. He ended up in a school which had only 5 children in the classroom, thus he had a lot of personal attention and did much better academically.



Werner Diebl

He ended up being three years behind when he graduated from high school and in the beginning Astrid was not able to find him a place in medical school. She then told Werner that her son was weak stomached and could not stand the sight of blood and for that reason was going into chemistry, but Werner wasn't fooled by this talk. He knew his sister was having a very hard time finding a place in medical school for the child, but Werner said to me, "You just watch and see, Astrid will come through for her son, and when she gets done he will be a doctor someday." And that's just what happened. Astrid could not find Wernerli a place in a German medical school, so she found him one in Budapest, Hungary. He studied there for two years, was in a class of only 5

students, the instructor taught the class in German and Wernerli did just fine. He also matured a lot in those two years, having been several years behind in maturity as he had come from a better, gentile background.



Werner Diebl

After the first two years in the Semmelweiss University in Budapest, he was able to transfer to the University of Munich close by home. He tried a summer school class in Munich after the first year but still was not able to cut the ice. However, after another year in Budapest, he found he could keep up with the German University, so when he graduated, he had a piece of sheepskin that meant something.



Werner Wilhelm II

Astrid invoked Werner's help in finding Werner a neurology residency placement as they were striking out all over Germany and the family wanted the child to take over the father's neurology and psychiatry practice when he retires in a few years. Werner made some inquiries, including talking to Dr Rocher when he was so very sick in the spring of 1992. We found out that in America a young physician takes a test and based on his test results, he may or may not find a placement. Naturally, the better the test results, the better the placement. Dr Rocher also said that a foreign doctor would have to have awfully good test results in order to get a US residency placement. The next time we talked to Astrid, she said that her son had found a German neurology residency. Astrid had been awfully peeved at Werner for not trying harder to find Wernerli a placement, but she had no idea of just how sick her brother really was at the time.



Dr. Kurt Diebl

Dr Diebl was hog wild with anger at the university professors when he heard that they had told his son not to pay attention to anything that his father told him about the practice of medicine as the father had been educated back in the Stone Age. Dr Diebl was constantly agonizing over that one. Over and over again he told us that story with a full compliment of emotion in his voice.



Dr Werner Wilhelm & Dr. Kurt Diebl

Werner and Astrid and Dr Diebl used to talk at great length about the dust ups they used to get into with Dr Wilhelm, who was very opinionated and stubborn and wanted things to be done his way or no way. Well, with a family full of bullheaded people, that didn't go over too well at all, and a full scale war would ensue. Once Dr Wilhelm started a big uproar in Dr Diebl's house and as things got real hot, he told Astrid to pack her things, she was going back with him to Kassel. Well Astrid never wanted any part of this fight which fulminated out of no where and she looked at her father and said with great trepidation in her heart, no, Vati, I don't think so. I think I will stay with my Kurt. Kurt Diebl said many times that he felt so good when Astrid defied her father and decided to stay with him. The father went off like a Roman candle and headed for the train station on foot alone, with suitcase in hand. That was very dangerous for him as he had a very bad heart. Mutti, totally off the wall from this blow up, and not wanting to get in the middle or take sides, realized that she had to go to the aide of her husband, so she also took off on foot to the train station, had a long talk with Vati, and ended up bringing him back to the Diebls for the remainder of the planned visit. Vati was very sullen but subdued for the rest of that visit.



Dr . Werner, Werner Diebl, Charlotte, Werner Wilhelm & Dr. Kurt Diebl

Another visit to the Diebls Werner was visiting there and Vati started ripping Werner apart in front of the entire family for no good reason. Dr Diebl listened for awhile then he swallowed his bubble gum and told Dr Wilhelm that he was not going to allow him to talk to Werner like that in his house. The entire family gave Kurt a lot of credit for saying that to Dr Wilhelm, both then, and years later, as they knew how much courage it took to say something like that to such a strong patriarchal figure. Naturally, that ended up in one more trip on foot to the train station, and that time the Kassel bound train must have been on schedule, for he went home instead of returning to the Diebl residence.



Dr. Werner Wilhelm

But with all the hoopla Dr Wilhelm caused, all of the family members, and especially Astrid, highly respected Dr Wilhelm's points of view and took very seriously his advise, even though they may not have always did what he said. Astrid said to me that when her father died, she had no one to turn to for advise. I was shocked at that statement and I said to myself, "but what about your husband, Kurt! He's a highly intelligent man, and one whose advise I would most certainly hold in high regard." But I kept my thoughts to myself. I am a peace loving soul and I had no intention of starting something.

A very strange thing happened in 1970 just before Dr Wilhelm's death that I could not believe my ears when I heard it. Werner and 's marriage was a very rocky one, and she had left him on a number of occasions shortly before and after their marriage, ending up at the YWCA and other shelters, going back and forth from the shelters to his house, until she finally filed for divorce in December, 1969. Werner was devastated and tried everything in his power to get her back, but she was determined to go through with it. But after the divorce was filed, they continued to see each other and to go on dates.



Dr. Werner, Charlotte, Astrid & Dr. Kurt Diebl

When Dr Wilhelm heard this he was very perturbed and sent a letter to his son, saying that to either have a clean table and not see her again, or to stay married and continue to have this circus for the rest of his life. What happened was that they divorced and also continued to see each other and have a big circus for the next 9 years. But right after the divorce, which initiated and followed through on despite Werner's objections, went to live with Dr & Astrid Diebl in Muhldorf! I will never figure out why that happened, or what Werner thought of that. or whether Werner felt that his family was being grossly disloyal to him, or what! The strangest darn things happen in that family! I can't imagine Astrid slapping her brother in the face like that, taking in his ex-wife who deserted him.



Roberta Cowlbeck & Werner Wilhelm II

What a time of turmoil this had to have been for poor Werner! In 4 short years he lost his mother, gave up a job at General Motors that he really liked due to incompatibility with the new supervisor. He lost Roberta, his long time girlfriend who he was very compatible with, and who loved him, because he would not marry her. He bought a number of apartment buildings in Detroit and Dearborn that gave him nothing but grief. He then met, courted, married and lost all in one year, and as he was getting his final divorce papers, he was also getting farewell letters from his father, who explained to Werner that he was dying and was trying to put his estate in order, but that as soon as Werner heard the father was dead, he had to immediately get over to

Germany and claim his half of the father's estate because Astrid intended to take everything. "Astrid ist hinter allem hier".



Charlotte, Dr Werner & Werner Wilhelm

Werner went over to Germany, visited his father in Muhldorf and was shocked to find only a shell of a man. His father had lost so much weight due to the final stages of congestive heart failure in which he could hardly eat or drink anything anymore due to failing health. The father had also suffered through having the fluid around his heart and lungs removed by hypodermic needle, a horror he said he would never more endure. Werner visited his father for 3 weeks but was not aware of the gravity of the situation, being a young man and not that well versed in the final stages of heart failure. The father tried so very hard, both in letters and in person, to be reconciliatory to his only son, Werner. But Werner, having suffered much at the hands of his father all through the years, was not willing or able to take the olive branch extended to him, and to the day he died, the two men were never reconciled.



Werner Wilhelm & Kurt Wilhelm

The father told Werner repeatedly to become the Executor of the estate and to take half of what he owned. Werner adamantly refused to be Executor and told his father to appoint Uncle Kurt. The father was heartsick at this suggestion on the part of his only son and told the son that he was the only one to perform this job. Werner again refused. This destroyed Dr Wilhelm's peace of mind in his last days on earth.



Dr. med Werner Wilhelm

Dr Wilhelm sent a letter to Werner in America giving his final instructions as to his burial wishes. He asked for a simple wooden casket, nothing expensive. He asked that Werner remain calm, quiet and subdued throughout the funeral and that there be no loud voices and no circus. He asked that there be no embalming. He asked that Werner put a copper lining on the top of his casket before the wooden lid be placed on so that if Werner created a cemetery in the wilderness in America, that his body could be shipped to America and buried there, if not too long a time intervened. Dr Wilhelm felt that 14 years was the most time that could elapse before his casket was completely broken together. He asked that the children, after splitting his money and property 50-50 make sure that Mutti was never left in the lurch. Dr Wilhelm told Werner that there was money in the Sweizerische Bank in Switzerland, both in a bank account and in a Nachttressor. Astrid had the key to the safety deposit box there. There were also bank accounts in Kassel, as well as land and an apartment building.

Dr Wilhelm described somewhat the testing and treatment he was about to undergo in May or June and that Dr Diebl would be overseeing the treatment to see that there would be the best possible outcome. Dr Wilhelm was quite doubtful as to whether he would be leaving that hospital alive.



Dr. Werner Wilhelm & Werner Wilhelm II

Dr Wilhelm did survive that hospitalization, albeit a very shaken and upset man who was very well aware of the temporary nature of his reprieve, and who knew that worse was yet to come. His

son Werner came and visited him that summer, they said their final farewells, and it was with a very heavy heart that he watched his only son board the train for his journey back to America.

Werner had tried many, many times in the 1960's to get his father to come to America to visit him, and many a time the father indicated that he would, then as the time grew near, he would back off and give some excuse for not coming. Werner felt very bad about this. He so wanted his father to come and get a good feel for life in America. The father very much wanted to come to America but was very fearful of making the plane trip, due to both fear of his poor health and fear of flying. If the father had visited Werner on a regular basis from 1955 to 1970 I do feel that the estrangement would have disappeared and that they would have had an understanding for one another's feelings. But that was never to be, and Werner had to do all of the traveling and when he did go to Germany, he received a lot of verbal abuse at the hands of his father, who had a very short fuse and never learned how to control his mouth. Dr Diebl said this about Werner's father, that as a scholar he was brilliant without equal, but as a human being and as a father, in his personal relationships, he was a total failure.



Dr. Werner Wilhelm & Werner Wilhelm II

When Werner went to Kassel to visit his father the year before his last visit, Mutti gave Werner a very dirty job which Werner didn't want any part of. A big fight ensued between Mutti and Werner and in the end, as always, Mutti prevailed. Vati did not want to quit his practice, but Mutti knew he was much too frail and could not physically do it anymore. So she ordered Werner to go down the street and physically remove all of Vati's possessions from his office. Werner did that with a very heavy heart, and as Werner knew would happen, that move completely broke Vati's spirit. It literally crushed him to be forced out of his practice and made to stay at home.



Charlotte Wilhelm

It seems that every time Werner came to Kassel the family would try to get him involved in some very touchy dirty work. Astrid remembers the time Werner went to Kassel to visit his parents just after his breakup with Roberta and his dismay when he got to Kassel he was met with a very distraught Mutti and Astrid. It turns out that his father was sleeping with his young, cute secretary and had told Mutti to get out and take Astrid with her, that he wanted to move his secretary in the apartment building. Mutti and Astrid begged Werner to talk some sense into the father and to send the secretary packing. No dice. Werner told them, "you got your problems and I got mine. I can't handle yours." Mutti handled this situation very nicely. She started dating a neighbor who had moved to America and had just come back to Kassel as his mother was dying. The man was a recent widower and was financially well to do as he had done very well for himself in America. He fell in love with Mutti, was willing to accept her child, and had even bought Astrid a bike and had a picture of the bike sent to Germany to show her what was waiting for her on the other side of the ocean. In the meantime the secretary had asked Dr Wilhelm when he was going to give her all of Mutti's jewelry. A light went on in the Dr's cranium. He suddenly realized that he was sleeping with a little gold digger and was also about to lose his family. So by the skin of her teeth, Mutti was able to salvage her marriage to Dr Wilhelm by giving him a little shock treatment. There never was anything dumb about Mutti! No siree!

But Astrid never got over the trauma of this incident. She talked about it over and over again in the ensuing years, even after the death of her brother. In her mind's eye she repeatedly sees that new bike leaning up against a tree in America, waiting for the little girl who never arrived.



Kurt Wilhelm & Gerti Nael Wilhelm

Dr Wilhelm took his heart medication and settled down to his last year in Kassel with Mutti by his side and little Wernerli under his roof. In September, 1970 Uncle Kurt and his wife Gerti (Mutti's sister) came to Kassel to celebrate Dr Wilhelm's 71st birthday. Being it was quite some distance away from Derenburg and it was such a hassle getting out of East Germany, Kurt and Gerti stayed in Kassel for a week's visit. On the 3rd of October all 4 of them decided to go for a shopping trip in Kassel. They all started out together and when they were in the shopping district, the 2 women went one way and the men the other. Dr Wilhelm and Kurt were strolling down the main street in Kassel and Dr Wilhelm stopped in front of the jewelry shop there to admire the Meissen china in the window.



Kurt Wilhelm

Suddenly Kurt thought he heard something. He looked around and could not find Dr Wilhelm. He looked again, and suddenly when he looked down he saw Dr. Wilhelm crumpled up on the pavement at his feet. Kurt felt for a pulse. There was none. He did CPR and artificial respiration, with no success. Dr Wilhelm had died instantly and there was no reviving him. The ambulance came. Still no success in reviving him. They took him to the mortuary chapel of the hospital (all dead people go to this chapel in the hospital).



Charlotte Nael Wilhelm

They called and called home for Mutti, but could not get her for quite some time as she was still shopping in Kassel, unaware of what had just happened. Finally they got her and she rushed to the hospital, flew into the mortuary chapel there, and immediately embraced her husband. He's still warm! He's not dead! Help him! Do something to save him! She screamed. She was totally, uncontrollably hysterical and the family had a very hard time controlling her. She wouldn't let go of his body, screaming he was still alive, she could tell, because he was still warm.



Dr. Werner Wilhelm in the hospital in Kassel

The family calmed her down, then went back home to Annestrasse 9, found Dr Wilhelm's best suit and coordinating clothing, then returned to the hospital. They purchased a wooden casket per his wishes, washed and dressed his body, and placed it in the casket. They then held the beginning services in the hospital, as is the custom in Germany.



Werner Wilhelm II

Werner flew right over and joined the family in the funeral services. The entire family slept in Vati's house in Annestrasse 9 as they were mostly from out of town. Werner slept on the couch in the living room. In the morning he got up, nice and refreshed from a deep sleep after that arduous flight over the Atlantic, and smiled and said he had a marvelous sleep and asked everyone else if they slept good too. He was immediately met with a half dozen very angry, frozen stares. Ya, you slept good, they said in unison. That we all know. We all spent an entirely sleepless night listening to your God awful snores! Nobody snores that loud, only you! Werner's friendly smile rapidly faded in the face of such unanimous animosity. Poor Werner! That was the first hint he had of just how bad his snoring had become!

(When I first heard Werner's snoring, I said to myself, "I don't believe this!" However, as the years came and went I found Werner's snoring a source of comfort, and believe it or not, his snoring sent me into somnolence. His snoring while I was driving was dangerous as when I heard his snoring, it immediately made me sleepy. In the last few years of his life, after he had lost considerable weight, his snoring disappeared. But then, he gently informed me that I was beginning to take up where he left off. He would smile and say that I purred like a kitten.)



Dr med Werner Wilhelm

The family paid their respects to Dr Wilhelm in the hospital chapel for about 3 days, then his body was removed to the chapel of the cemetery in Kassel. It is a very fine chapel and his casket was placed on a platform in the middle of the chapel. Werner walked me into this chapel years later to show me where his father's casket stood and he explained the service to me. There were very many flowers placed all around the chapel that day. After the services were completed, a copper lining was placed over the top of the casket, on the inside of where the wooden cover would be placed. Several pictures were taken of the body in the casket and of the flowers.

The family then began the last walk with the body down the isles of the cemetery to Dr Wilhelm's final resting place. We have some very fine pictures of the Wilhelm family taking this last walk together. A very young Werner in glasses can be seen on the right hand side of the picture in a black top coat. The pall bearers then put the casket on a set of straps and gently lowered the casket into the grave.



Werner Wilhelm II bei Dr Wilhelm's Ruhestätte

The grave is an exceptionally fine one by European standards. The grave is a solid cement vault with very fine crosses on the side of the outer walls. (Cement vaults are very unusual in Germany). This grave site has room for 3 people and was available for purchase at that particular time as it belonged to a family who was lost in the American bombing of Kassel in 1945. The cemetery published as required by law and no family members came forward to claim this grave, so the cemetery reclaimed it and offered it for sale just at the time that Werner's family was searching for an appropriate grave for the father. The Wilhelms were very grateful to have found this particular grave as nothing else of this quality was available to them. They felt that it was a particularly good stroke of luck that it became available at just this time.

After the casket was lowered into the grave, the family members placed evergreen boughs over it, a custom that Dr Wilhelm's family followed with every burial in Naumburg, and one that Dr Wilhelm taught his children. Pastor Papp, a long time friend of Dr Wilhelm, conducted the chapel and graveside services per the request of Dr Wilhelm himself. Pastor Papp and Dr Wilhelm had many a long philosophical discussion in Kassel, and although Dr Wilhelm was an atheist, they had many an interesting discussion and greatly respected one another. Pastor Papp was transferred a good distance away from Kassel shortly before Dr Wilhelm died, but when he was contacted by the family, he immediately traveled back to Kassel, saying it was an honor to conduct the last services for his long time, respected friend.

After the services were completed, they all traveled back to Dr Wilhelm's apartment at Annestrasse 9. The family remained together for a few more days, then they one by one gradually wandered off back to their own homes.



Werner Wilhelm



Astrid Diebl



Dr. Werner Wilhelm & Dr. Kurt Diebl

Astrid then asked Werner if he wanted to go to Kassel and to Switzerland and clean out Vati's bank accounts. Werner told Astrid he was in deep grief and could not at all think of picking Vati's accounts clean, that to do so would make him feel like a buzzard. How could I possibly clean out all his money when his body is still warm, was Werner's reply. Astrid, I will come back to Germany next year, when Vati's death is not so fresh and we will then go to Switzerland and to Kassel and settle the financial matters. Just not now. This is just not the right time.



Kurt & Werner in train station

However, when Werner went to Germany the next year, nothing was mentioned by the family, Astrid or Mutti, regarding a financial settlement of Vati's affairs. In that intervening year, Werner had told all of us many times, Astrid had Werner sign Vollmachts, and she used these Vollmachts to clean out Vati's bank accounts. She then intermingled her and Dr Wilhelm's funds to the point that no one knew anymore what was whose.

Werner was no dummy. Even though he was in America, he knew just what his sister and Mutti were up to. He felt that he was being cheated wholesale out of his inheritance from his father, just like Vati warned him would happen if he did not immediately settle the estate as soon as he died, and to take over as Executor to see that everything was handled on the up and up. Werner's father told Werner that he felt that Werner was honest to the penny and would discharge his

duties as Executor admirably. But Werner, who had been run over time and again by Astrid and Mutti, was not up to handling such a monumental battle. So he remained in America and brooded and became very depressed and morose that year. Werner's deep depression was giving his sister Astrid fits. She wrote to him over and over again that his mental state was causing her and Kurt Diebl great grief. She was afraid that he might do himself harm. She wrote that if things became really bad he should tell them and they would take the next plane to America to help him out. Astrid asked Werner if his depression was due to money problems!

They did end up taking the next plane to America, but not to comfort Werner, but rather to assure their financial future. When Astrid and Kurt came over, they got into Werner's private office, went through his papers, made themselves thoroughly familiar with his financial dealings, and when they left Werner's house and returned to Germany, Werner's original copy of Vati's last will and testament was never found again. This loss of Vati's will altered Werner's inheritance by half. With the will he was 50-50 owner of all Vati had. With the disappearance of the will, he became 1/4 owner of everything as Mutti now inherited half, and he inherited nothing from Mutti as he was not her blood relative. But regardless of what percentage Werner was to inherit he ended up inheriting nothing.



Werner Wilhelm II

I asked Werner why he allowed this to happen, why he did not exercise his rights as son and executor of the will. Werner's reply? A very sad one indeed. He said to me, "I didn't need Vati's money, I had enough of my own. I just wanted to see whether they loved me or not, and now I know".

Astrid wrote Werner a number of frantic letters over the course of the next year after Vati's death. She was extremely concerned over his mental condition as he appeared to be very depressed indeed over all that happened to him in the past 4 years, and in particular, what Astrid and Mutti had done to him financially. They must have thought I was stupid or something, to think that I did not realize what they had done to me, he had said to me and to others. Are you having financial difficulties, Astrid had the gall to ask him in one of her letters, trying to discern the reason for his mental depression!

In the meanwhile Werner was still seeing on a regular basis in her apartment on Crooks Rd. wanted Werner to buy her a small, modest, older home on Crooks Rd but Werner refused. The Thursday before he died, he had sneaked over to 's house behind my back because he wanted to

reminisce over their lifetime together, and in that evening he talked about that house and said that he should have bought it for her as she had asked him to.

Werner drove half crazy in the ensuing years, between 1970 and 1980 as he would not get out of her life, but rather ended up in her apartment on a regular basis. However, it also appeared was not ready to give him up either, and they had a mutually symbiotic relationship for the next 10 years. Werner would hide in the bushes and drive off Dinora's would be suitors when they came over. Dinora would have a little too much to drink when she became very upset and depressed and would call Werner at 4 am and dump all her problems on his shoulders. He would bellow that it was 4 am, that he had to get up in a few hours to go to work in the morning, and he needed the next few hours sleep. They would verbally abuse each other something fierce. I was unknowingly party to some of these conversations in the late 70's and when I would ask Werner who that person on the phone at that ungodly hour was, he would reply that it was a nursing home employee. I had no reason to think otherwise, for until May of 1980 I had no idea that Dinora even existed, let alone was an ex-wife. Werner had repeatedly told me that he had never married, that he was "an old bachelor".



Bernadette Jotzo & Werner Wilhelm II

Werner had other girlfriends both before, during and after his engagement and marriage and breakup with Dinora. Dinora knew and had met most of these girlfriends. Roberta was before Dinora's time, and Dinora only knew of her. Ann was during her engagement period with Werner. When Werner spirited Dinora across the Canadian border he took her to Ann's for Sunday dinner and introduced Dinora to Ann and her family as his cousin. Ann then went to visit Dinora a few days after the dinner and began pumping her as to how rich Werner was. Dinora was totally confused; why was she interested in Werner's pocketbook? Answer? Ann told Dinora she was going to marry Werner! But I am going to marry Werner, Dinora thought to herself, and was now totally confused as to what was going on.



Werner & Beatrice

To make matters more confusing just before and after Werner married Beatrice he was getting love letters and intimate phone calls from Bernadette Jotzo, the daughter of a millionaire brick factory owner in Undorf, Germany, who also thought she was about to marry Werner in a short period of time. Werner would hang on the phone with Bernadette for hours when he was still on his honeymoon with Beatrice! What a confusing situation for all involved! Finally the Bernadette romance coupled with Werner's new and very turbulent marriage was getting totally out of hand,

so Werner pretended that he had moved, forwarded her letters to Florida, then had them returned from there to Germany with the notation that he had moved and left no forwarding address. Bernadette's letters to Werner somehow got from Florida back to him and were never opened by him. In February of 1993 I opened these sealed letters. What did they contain? A stern reprimand from Bernadette's mother, telling him that the next time he terminates a romance, please be man enough to tell the woman and not give her such a royal run around.

Bernadette was a very classy, rich woman and she loved Werner and was hoping that he would marry her and take over her father's brick factory. But Werner somehow had the fear that he and Bernadette were not a love match, and perhaps, due to her no nonsense approach to life, and owning the house and the factory, would try to boss him. But Werner was never quite sure whether he made the right decision not to marry her and he talked about her, her parents and the brick factory right to the very end of his days. He talked about how well the father treated him and how he gave him the unbridled use of his brand new Mercedes, treated him like a son, and told him he would turn the brickworks over to his name after he married Bernadette. Werner was in love with the father, if not the daughter. Werner had been introduced to Bernadette through his German relatives who thought that in light of Werner's background as a Rittergut Besitzer, this would indeed be a good match for him.

Beatrice thought Ann would have also been a good match for him too. Werner had dated Ann for a number of years and had also gone to bed with her for quite some time. It was due to the fact that Ann never got pregnant, I feel, is the reason he never married her. Later Ann dated someone else and was shocked when she soon found herself pregnant in the new relationship. (Werner had told Ann that the fertility problem was hers, not his.) Ann was intelligent, well educated and articulate and loved Werner. But she also loved his wallet, which greatly worried Werner.

Werner also courted a very classy German lady, Ute Aul. He was dressed up in a tuxedo and she in a fine fur coat when they had their picture taken. She was also a very acquisitive lady, Werner was to soon find out, for he had bought her a fine 1 carat diamond ring, and when they broke up she refused to give the ring back. That was one of the very few times when Werner did not get his engagement ring back when he broke up.



Marianne & Werner Wilhelm II

One woman that Werner could never get out of his thoughts was Marianne who lived in Birmingham. He put her on a pedestal and never brought her back down to reality when he spoke of her years later. She had a master's degree and came from a very fine family he told me over and over again. Her father was an executive in National Bank of Detroit in downtown Detroit, but was dead before Werner dated Marianne. The family all held him in high regard. The father had purchased a house on Maple Rd in Birmingham which sat on a huge lot, with the property extending way back to the street behind them. It was large enough to build apartment buildings

on, which Werner intended to do when he married Marianne. He went with Marianne for a number of years before he finally broke off their relationship due to the mother. The mother was at least 400 to 450 lbs and she was more effective than a chastity belt. She went everywhere with her daughter on every date, whether it was to a restaurant around the corner, or a trip up north. She would sit there in the restaurant and would complain about anything and everything. She would turn the china over and read the label, complaining that it was not up to her standards. She would then examine the silverware, and was appalled that it was not a brand name and was not real silver. Then she would examine the table cloth and napkins, disparaging their lack of quality. Then came the menu. It never had the right compliment of food items on it. Then when the food came, she would send everything back. Too salty, not enough salt, too hot, too cold, wrong cut of meat, wrong seasonings, etc. Even thick skinned Werner would end up being embarrassed for her. But the picture I found of the three of them which made me hold my sides with laughter was taken at Boyne Mountain ski resort. There was Werner and Marianne and peeking out from behind Marianne with a big impish smile on her face was 450 lb mama! Believe me, when I say she went everywhere, she did go everywhere!



Marianne und ihrer Mutter

Werner ended up in his attorney, George Armbruster's office, asking for advise regarding whether to continue or break up with Marianne. George Armbruster had a pat formula for determining whether or not to continue with a relationship. He took out a yellow legal pad and drew a line right down the middle. On the left side he wrote FOR and on the right side he wrote AGAINST. Okay, Werner he said, put her good points on the FOR side, and her bad points on the AGAINST side. So young Werner started writing on the legal pad. He wrote furiously, listing one thing after another. When he was done, he handed the pad to George Armbruster. George looked at the pad, then quizzically at Werner. Werner, you listed lots of things on the for side and nothing on the against side! What's the problem? Well, the mother, Werner replied. The attorney ripped the page off the pad, crumpled it up and threw it in the garbage. Nope, it'll never work, the attorney said. Forget her and find someone else!

Werner broke up with Marianne and started dating others. About a year later the mother called Werner and begged him to start dating her daughter Marianne again. She said she would stay home and not interfere with the relationship. But somehow Werner never went back. But he never forgot her either. One nice spring day when he was on a date with me he pulled up to her house and was emotionally moved to see her carrying groceries from her car to her house. He obviously still loved her and he was very undecided as to whether to pull up and say hello to her. But he was just as attracted to the property she owned too, for he drove all the way around it, describing its attributes and its boundaries to me.

But when I found Marianne's picture in the basement after Werner's death, I was shocked as she was not classy or beautiful as he had so often described to me. Not at all. He had a totally unrealistic image of her.

One thing that I was amused at was shortly before he died, Werner had been reminiscing about all his old girlfriends and fiancées and had told me that almost every one of them had been Catholic and he couldn't figure out why he was repeatedly attracted to Catholic girls. Probably because they tend to be conservative and faithful to their marriage vows, I replied. And probably because they tend to take a lot more guff from men than non Catholics.

In regard to his courtship with Ann, when he decided to get married to me in the Catholic Church I told him it was not possible as he did not have any instruction in that faith, a requirement for marriage in that church. Oh, I had instruction in the Catholic faith in Sacred Heart Church in Dearborn when I was engaged to Ann, he replied. Oh, ya, sure, We're going to tell the priest that?

And then there was Barbara Waldo. He was engaged to her and went with her for years. She came from a very fine family. Her father was also deceased and he had also been a high official in the bank. Why didn't you get married to her, I asked? She was a cold fish, he replied. I was at a St Anne's Christmas party in the late 1970's and while Werner and I and a bunch of other people were sitting in his office eating lunch, in waltzes Barbara Waldo with her fiancée, whom she will be marrying in a few weeks. What she was doing was bringing the two men together to compare one with the other before taking the final step. It was obvious she still had a crush on Werner. Boy, I sure don't believe any of this, I say to myself. Especially when he introduces me to Barbara as his cousin. She was real pretty, somewhat older than me, and definitely a real cold fish. But Werner was certainly enjoying himself that day.

Beatrice burst out laughing and said, "Yes, he dated all those fine women with good educations from real good family backgrounds, and then he married me!" It's too funny! She then became serious and said that he and I were a perfect match, that I was his soul mate. And whether he wanted to admit it or not, I was his intellectual match, keeping up with him in everything. Beatrice and Rudi begged him repeatedly over the years to marry me, that he and I would be much happier as man and wife than he repeatedly rejecting me. Werner would get furious at them, screaming at them to mind their own business. If over their home he would pack up and leave, if on the phone he would slam down the receiver. But once he got married to me, he told Rudi and Beatrice and everyone else who would listen that he should have done it years ago and he was so sorry he missed out on all those years. The night before he died Werner said to me that I had to understand why he didn't trust me enough to marry me sooner, that I had to realize what kind of a family he had come from and what they had done to him to cheat him and hurt him all through the years.



Edith

Werner had a long term friend by the name of Edith. She was about his age, somewhat on the chubby side, very pretty, blond hair, blue eyes and intelligent. She had a crush on him and when she saw that he would probably be shortly marrying Beatrice she took her chances and proposed to Werner. His answer to the proposal? Why would I ever want to marry someone as old as you! Poor Edith. She must have been crushed by that answer.

Then there was Judy Oust. She was the artistic type and somewhat psychic. She has a number of psychics for good friends, especially a friend out east who supposedly never misses, or hardly ever anyway. Werner liked Judy but would never have seriously considered marrying her. But he liked her very much and she had helped him with a lot of his heart work and letter writing for the nursing home propaganda campaigns he used to run. And Werner liked Judy's father very much. He was also artistic and played the piano very well. Judy and her parents had attended a number of St Anne's Christmas parties and the father always played the piano. Then one day we got a pathetic call from Judy that her father died. Werner and I attended both days of the wake and Judy and her mother were both in very bad shape. A male family member was driving them back and forth and watching out for their welfare. We didn't hear too much from Judy after that until Werner died when she called me and had a very nice talk with me about Werner's earlier life when she knew him in the 60's and 70's.

Then there was a whole series of older ladies who loved Werner dearly and all of whom were crushed when they found out I was dating him.

The most serious was Nancy Hefferon I, his 17 year Director of Nursing in Wil Mar. She was one year younger than him and loved him dearly. She had a big crush on him and had high hopes of marrying him after her divorce. She worshipped the ground he walked on. When he brought me to Wil Mar in the late 1970's she was crushed. Due to her unrequited love she left Wil Mar in 1983 as it was too painful for her to remain knowing she couldn't have him and I was coming to work along side Werner in an Administrative capacity. She was also very nervous as Werner's bookkeeper's helper, Barbara Barr, called me in to follow through on an obvious embezzlement of funds at Wil Mar. The aides said to Werner and me that Mrs. Hefferon spent many hours head to head with the bookkeeper Margaret pouring over the books. Many of the help felt that Margaret was not intelligent enough to have pulled off the alteration of the books by herself. Once we started examining the books Margaret Henderson sold her home and suddenly left the state for points west. Nothing was done in regard to punishment or retribution as Werner realized the money was gone. Werner blamed the CPA Larry Brown for not catching this sooner. Larry claimed he warned Werner the receivables were going up and to look for the possibility of embezzlement. Margaret was gone and Werner would not have gone against Mrs. Hefferon after 17 years of faithful service, especially in light of the fact that her rate of pay was always on the bottom end of the scale for a Director of Nursing. Werner and Nancy had been through a lot of rough times together and she had stood by his side throughout it all.

Then there was Vivian Sunday, about Werner's age and about 300 lbs. She owned a nursing home up north first together with her husband, then after his death she ran it herself. She was eager to see Werner at every nursing home meeting she and he attended. He would always have lunch with her and her hopes would soar. One time he invited her to have lunch with him at

Boyne Mountain and she accepted his invitation eagerly, but when she saw me sitting at his table she literally ran the other way, in a total fit of grief. Later she was selling her nursing home and Werner wanted to buy it, but she was so upset over him having another girlfriend that she refused to entertain an offer from him.



Hari Mali

Later there was Irene in the kitchen at St. Anne's. Irene was 20 years older than Werner, was married to a real nice Germanic appearing man, but worshipped the ground Werner walked on. When she caught sight of Werner, her eyes would just literally mist over with love.



Irene & Werner

The kitchen used to roar with laughter at how much Irene adored Werner and how much it showed in her eyes. Irene was a simple soul and very gullible. Werner repeatedly told her not to sign for food deliveries to the kitchen as the delivery men would short her almost every time knowing she never counted the incoming goods. Over and over again, she would forget and when the shylock minded delivery man would pass the invoice past her face and hand her a pen she would sign the over inflated paperwork. The last time she did that the dietary supervisor, Cindy Lerner, came in to work shortly thereafter and proofed out the delivery. She found many of the items on the bill were not delivered, they were very much shortchanged.



Cindy Lerner

Cindy immediately ran to Werner in his office, red faced and telling him about the shortage in the delivery and that that occurred because Irene signed the slip. Werner bellowed, send Irene to me. Irene came, looked lovingly at Werner and said, "yes, Mr. Wilhelm". Werner took a piece of paper laying on his desk, wrote a few words on the paper and then shoved the paper across his desk to Irene and said to Irene, "here, sign this." Irene signed it and pushed it back in front of Werner. Werner said to Irene, Irene, do you know what you just signed? Irene said, no, Mr. Wilhelm, with a worried look beginning to appear across her face. Do you want me to read it to you, Werner asked her. She was really nervous now and did not reply. Werner read the note to her. It said, I agreed to be fired. Irene was totally shaken. Werner asked her why she signed it. Irene said she signed it because Mr. Wilhelm told her to. Why did you sign the food bill? Because the deliveryman asked me to, Irene replied. Werner spent the next 10 minutes hollering at Irene that she as not to sign anything!! Did Irene refrain from signing delivery bills? I doubt it! An aside on Irene – she was a very slow worker but was always there on time and every day she was scheduled. The faster younger kitchen workers said they could work faster alone than with Irene. So when Mali bought St. Anne's from Werner the first thing Mali did with great relish and lots of fan fare was to fire Irene. That made Werner very sad. However a few months later when Werner came he saw Irene back at her old job again. Hey, I see you have Irene back, Werner said to Mali. Oh ya, man, Mali replied. All those young fast workers quit and I didn't have anyone in the kitchen to work. I had to come in myself at 7 am and start breakfast, Mali said, so I hired Irene back and now every morning she is here at 6:30 am starting breakfast.

Mrs. Shopinski, the Director of Nursing at St Anne's also had a crush on Werner, but she was married, was a professional woman and kept her love for him in bounds. She was a very pretty, plump blue eyed blonde Polish woman, very soft spoken and kind. She was a very good Director of Nursing for the 1960s and 1970s but was too maternal and nurturing sort of woman to please the health department. They preferred the colder no nonsense professional type of younger woman. (As was also the case with Mrs. Hefferon. She socialized with the patients, played games with them in the afternoon and took them on outings. With the new health dept rules all her time was devoted to paperwork.)

Before Mrs. Shopinski's time there was another younger Director of Nursing who also set her cap for Werner. This one Werner was somewhat attracted to and he was considering dating her, but he was turned off by the fact that she had two sons, so he kept his distance. They were good boys and were a happy family. The two boys were especially close and one day the family got a message that one of the boys was killed in a motorcycle accident. The other son was devastated and over the course of the next year he got more and more morose and finally things got so bad that the mother felt that she had to hospitalize him for his own safety. She got a court order against his will and got him committed. He broke out of the hospital and the next day the mother was no call, no show at work. St. Anne's people went out to her house to see what the problem was and found her dead on the kitchen floor, with blood everywhere. Her son, who was furious with her for committing him, had come home and had stabbed her 40 times with a butcher knife.

Then there was the sharp nurse at St Anne's that Werner was thinking of dating when he first bought the place. But first he had to get up his nerve to ask her out. He would hold management meetings in the morning and one of his topics of conversation was how to approach this cute nurse to ask her out. These discussions went on for days, with Werner having no luck in getting

up his nerve. Then one day the nurses came into his office carrying the morning newspaper, and all the women were abuzz with what they had just read there. Werner's would be girlfriend just got herself arrested by the cops for having killed her boyfriend!

Then Werner did have a couple of dates with the daughter of a real estate developer who owned apartment buildings all over Detroit, Ralph Lipshaw. The developer's daughter was a real sharp woman and had a college degree. Werner felt that there might have been definite possibilities with this sharp woman. But fate was unkind to both of them. Werner walked into the real estate office one day and found the man in a total state of shock. His beloved daughter, his only child, was sent by him to the apartments to collect the delinquent rents. Someone out there didn't feel like paying the rent and shot her to death. Werner didn't seem to have very good luck picking and keeping his girlfriends, it seems.



Elfie & Werner Wilhelm II

Werner had some early loves in Germany as a child too. His most enduring love was for a girl who lived in Derenburg, Uncle Kurt's home town. Her name was Elfie and she was real cute. She was some relation on Kurt's wife's side of the family and she and Werner stood up for Kurt's first marriage together. They made an adorable pair, Werner being 10 years old and Elfie being about 5. She was pretty, had a real nice way about her, and she never totally left Werner's conscious. He talked about Elfie a few days before he died. He wanted to see her again, but then said with a sad resignation that she was probably long married and had 4 or 5 kids by now.

Lotta Thiele Dassler always carried a torch for Werner. But he preferred much younger women and thought therefore that Lotte was much too old for him. Whenever they got together they fought like cat and dog, Lotte often ending up by cuffing him in mirth and exasperation. She was his next door neighbor and knew everything that went on in Werner's house. She was labeled the village newspaper by others in the village.



Dorna bei Zschippach

Then there was the episode on Zschippach when he was about 10 years old. His cousins, 3 or 4 times removed, the Bergers whose mother was a Brehmer, lived on the neighboring Gut, Dorna. They had two daughters and no sons. The daughters names were Liselotte and Marianna. They were both older than him, Marianne being about 4 years older. The Berger father made a deal with Mama Martha. If one of his girls fell in love with Werner and married him, then the father

would give over the entire Gut Dorna to that daughter and settle cash on the other daughter. So they had a dinner and an afternoon social for the purpose of the children getting to know one another. After the day was almost over, father Berger asked his girls how they liked Werner. Liselotta piped right up, oh, but Werner is so cutely cross-eyed! Werner was furious at the suggestion that he was cross-eyed, there being nothing wrong with his eyes! Probably as a result of this conversation, Werner has shown no interest in the Berger girls. And shortly before he died he once more reiterated this story and once again vehemently said, "I was never cross eyed!"



Werner & Sandy Wilhelm

On the 1st of December, 1976 I got a phone call from a gentleman with a heavy German accent that would forever change my life. His accent was so heavy that I had to listen carefully in order to fully understand him. It had been a bitter cold November, the coldest in my entire lifetime by far, and so I was in little mood to go anywhere, especially considering that I had dated 6 or 7 fellows in the past 6 months who in no way were suited to me. But there was something special sounding about this man who called himself Vern, so I decided to meet him. We met in the Shelby Inn at Mound and West Utica Rd on the 4th of December, 1976, the day before my birthday. When I went into the restaurant he was sitting in a cozy little corner in the bar section. Next to him was an enchanting little Christmas tree and rail, all nicely bedecked in miniature Christmas lights that twinkled as we spoke. Werner's conversation beguiled me from the very beginning. He spoke of Zschippach, what life was like on the Rittergut, and how the Communists came and confiscated everything. I hung on his every word. After lunch he invited me to his home. We sat in his living room and talked of many things. I was entranced by the beautiful wood on the walls and ceiling in his living room. It was a very beautiful, spacious living room. He wanted me to stay longer, but I had to leave as my family was taking me out for my birthday dinner. He was mildly disappointed. Sunday I went to my Uncle Bill's house for my birthday and had a very good time with my family, but I kept thinking back on that fascinating, brilliant German I had just met. I already knew that life would never be the same. He didn't call me on Monday or Tuesday, so on Wednesday I called him, got a wrong number, the number he had given me for his private office at St. Anne's had the last 2 numbers transposed. So remembering that he said he owned St. Anne's Nursing Home in Detroit, I called him there and the operator put me through to him. We had a nice conversation and he asked me out again, which I readily accepted.



Werner Wilhelm & Sandy Bender

On a subsequent date Werner and I went to the Country Inn on Cass Ave in downtown Utica. That was a nice chicken place where the food was good. Werner and I bought cowboy hats in Rochester and Werner bought a cowboy shirt.

One supper time we went to the locker room in downtown Utica. While we were finishing our soup I remarked to Werner that the heavy set waitress was staring at us with a mean look on her face and I wondered why. Werner replied that he had just fired her from Wilmar. Boy, I sure hoped she didn't put something funny in our soup!

We then started dating on a regular basis, once or twice a week, for the next several years. We always went out to a fine restaurant and had a fine meal. And his stories about his life were always fascinating, even spell binding at times as he related his long ago and far away experiences in pre-war, war time and post war Germany. What I was totally unaware of at the time was that from 1976 to the end of 1980 Werner was dating his ex-wife, of whom I had no knowledge as he always said he was an old bachelor, at the same time he was going out with me. He would holler about having to eat 2 dinners in one night when he took me out for a late date. I told him he didn't have to eat the earlier one. He bellowed that he did. Now I know why. He went to his ex-wife's apartment, had a leisurely dinner with her, then he went home to Utica and ate with me too. He had call forwarding on his private line at St. Anne's so he could forward his calls to his ex-wife's home, make everyone think he was still at St. Anne's, then on his way home he would return to St. Anne's and forward his calls to his home in Utica. There were several times I realized that the calls were being forwarded but I never for one moment distrusted him. What a shock the whole thing was when I found all this out shortly after his death.

Astrid said that Werner always ran on two tracks, and I always felt this as I was dating him, although I had no clear picture of just what the other track consisted of. He was always standoffish, always guarding whenever he felt that I wanted more out of the relationship. There were always strange undercurrents with Werner where I knew things were not as they seemed on

the surface, that he had a whole another side to his life that I knew was there but was unable to ferret out what was going on.



Werner & Sandy

In December of 1976 he asked me to go to Florida with him for the Christmas holidays. I very reluctantly said yes as I just met him and never went anywhere overnight with a man in my life as I wasn't that type of woman. I have always been a staunch Catholic with like morals. But I was now 31 years old. Werner was a substantial person and I pretty much trusted him, so I said yes. However that trip never materialized as he got epididymitis and was far too ill to travel. Werner loved to travel throughout Florida but due to the many problems he had with his nursing homes, especially due to the fact that he was doing major construction at both homes, we were not able to travel to Florida till the 1980s. However he did get to travel to Florida in May of the first year I knew him, in 1977. Doug and Karen bought a time share on their honeymoon and were unable to use it as they were expecting a child in July, so they allowed Werner and I to use it. Werner wanted to go alone so he went alone to the Lauderdale Beach Club in Fort Lauderdale. It was new and first class but it was one block from the beach. I later found out that he invited another woman to go with him but she was unable to.

In January, 1977 after the epididymitis healed Werner took me to the Kingsley Inn in Bloomfield on Woodward for a very fine prime rib dinner, and afterwards on the drive home he hit me with the very serious news that due to the epididymitis he had no sperm count whatsoever so we would not be able to have children. This was as big of a blow to him as it was to me, if not more so. But I loved him enough to want to stay with him even without children.

The first year I knew Werner he was very worried about the epididymitis he had, about the nodule in his prostate and about the sterility, so as a sudden he flew to Boston, Massachusetts to consult with a famous Urologist that he had seen earlier when he first discovered the nodule. I expected him back in a few days. He was no call, no show. I was so very worried about him. I thought they had hospitalized him, and maybe even performed surgery. Then one day he shows up home, all tanned and chipper. He said he went to the Grand Bahamas after seeing the doctor. I could have killed him with all the worrying I went through. He said he sent me a postcard. I told him I never got the card. A week later the card came. After he died Beatrice said he called her. So my feelings were hurt that he never called me.



Datsun B210 Auto & Sandy on Puch Moped

When I first met Werner I was driving a Datsun B210, a very small but very economical car. He made lots of fun about my car, saying the only way he would fit in that car is if he hung his peter out the window. But when he heard it got 37 miles per gallon he stopped making fun of the car. He stood there with a serious look on his face making mental calculations, then declared that the savings in gas mileage was so great that over the course of the next 4 years the car would pay for itself.



Sandy & Werner Wilhelm II

The first Easter that Werner and I were together he had an unusual idea of what would constitute an Easter bonnet. He bought each of us a fine felt cowboy hat. He then also bought each of us expensive cowboy shirts at the western store in Rochester. The clerk in the western store was a real skinny guy, about 110 lbs. When Werner picked out a shirt that would fit him and brought it up to the counter to pay for it the clerk took offence that the 3X shirt cost the same amount of money that his size small shirt cost. He was mumbling to himself that there was twice to 3 times the material in this size shirt and he felt that paying the same price for his small shirt he was subsidizing the cost of the big shirt. Well anyways Werner and I both put on our outfits and cowboys hats for Easter and then Werner suggested that we go to St. Lawrence Church in our getups for Sunday mass. And that we did and boy did the priest ever cast many a glance our way staring at our cowboy hats! I felt kind of self conscious but Werner was right in his element and quite proud of himself.



Bill Bender

Werner got along with my brother Bill quite well but that was the only member of my family he was truly comfortable with. He used to talk to Bill regularly on the phone and in person. One statement that Bill made really tickled Werner's funny bone was when Bill would call Doug's babies "rodents". Werner hated little children so he loved the term Rodents to refer to them. Bill also called them rug rats which also tickled Werner.

One day Werner was visiting Bill in his apartment and Werner saw a 24 X 48 frame on one of Bill's oil paintings that he really wanted for his Mama's picture so he told Bill he wanted to buy the oil painting with frame. They agreed on a price and Bill sold it to him.. Werner took it home and put his Mama's beloved picture in that new frame, and put aside the old frame and the oil painting which he had no particular interest in. When Bill heard what happened he asked for the oil painting and Mama's old frame back, which Werner gave to him while mumbling that Bill was an Indian giver.

Then in 1980 when I was so sick from lack of thyroid Bill was the only one who called Werner and told him how I was doing. Werner said Bill was his only true friend in the family. But the family was baffled by what was happening to me and didn't know what to make of it. I was going into a coma when Werner and mom drove me to the hospital and my sight and hearing felt like I was underwater, seeing and hearing from the bottom of a deep pool of water. I could not comprehend all of what people were saying and I knew it was due to thyroid but no one would listen and get me back on a thyroid pill that I was not sensitive to. Those were a very difficult few weeks for Werner, my family and me. Werner made it extremely hard on me because the few days before I went to the hospital I repeatedly called him at work and at home and told him I was so sick, getting sicker and needed help and he was very distant and impersonal towards me. When he picked me up on that Saturday I had had absolutely no sleep in over 5 days and was hallucinating. It was a most frightening and dangerous situation. And at St Joseph's they paid no attention to my repeated assertions that I needed thyroid. The idiots discharged me and told them to take me home with no thyroid. They gave me a prescription for a tranquilizer. I ended up turning on Werner because he was taking me home and leaving me alone in this comatose state. It was a horrible day for him and me but I ended up getting to a doctor who knew about thyroid coma and he put me on a type of thyroid that did not create the symptoms that synthroid did and in several weeks I was on my way to feeling better. But it wasn't till about Easter that I was back to normal. It takes at least 4 weeks for the thyroid levels to stabilize in one's system. By the time I felt better Werner's birthday had passed and I had not seen or talked to him in several weeks. I bought him a present and went to his home and rang the bell on Brownell. He had been very depressed those weeks and seemed genuinely glad to see me again. He was scared and wary for a few days, but things quickly got back to normal again. I stayed with him that weekend but Saturday morning was miserable as he had nothing in the house to eat except Wheaties which I ate dry. He then drove to Zip Printing to pick up stuff and he stopped at Baskin Robbins and bought a pint of chocolate chip mint ice cream. What a goofy breakfast that was !



Dinora Pitz

Unbeknownst to me Werner had a number of crises on his hands that week. My dad was in the hospital having surgery and Dinora's dad was dying in Italy. Werner called up her dad and raised holy hell with him saying that he had treated her so poorly and had left her bereft in the world

without funds and that he was a lousy father. Later referring to how badly he treated me that day I finally got treatment for the thyroid coma Werner said it was his fault that that had happened because of the way he treated me.



Doug Jr, Michelle, Michael & Karen Bender

Werner also got along fairly good with Doug's wife Karen. He liked her but she was always so quiet that Werner had a problem trying to keep a conversation going with her at family gatherings. He would ask her a bunch of nondescript questions to keep the conversation going but she would merely answer yes or no and let the conversation repeatedly drop. Werner, ever a loquacious fellow, got thoroughly exasperated and in desperation asked her if she was pregnant again yet! (She had 2 very young children at this point). She laughed a nervous laugh and said no, but darned if she wasn't pregnant again a week later! When we were having fertility problems and going through all the testing and Karen just had her third with no difficulty Werner burst out with "How do you do that!?" Karen's tongue in cheek reply? It's easy – you can do it lying down.

I used to go to his office at St. Anne's fairly often. He told me to tell everyone that I was his cousin. This really hurt my feelings and no one believed him when he said that. They all told him I was his new girlfriend. He would deny that.



Werner vorne St. Anne's Nursing Home

Werner bought St. Anne's in 1970. He was real scared about buying it as he knew nothing about nursing homes. But he always liked the building and thought it was an apartment building. George Armbruster, his attorney, who also owned nursing homes. Told him to buy it, that it was a good deal. The doctor, Dr. Farnum, who owned it had just dropped dead on his desk. Mrs. Farnum, his wife, had cancer and told Werner she had to remain on his Blue Cross, which she did until she died one year later. Mrs. Farnum was ultra cautious and her closing papers said only that it was a building Werner was buying, she refused to sell it to him as a nursing home as she wanted nothing coming back on her later. Werner gave \$200,000 in cash to the real estate, Curran & Johnson in Grosse Pointe to hold until closing. Werner said he knew you never gave that kind of money to a real estate as earnest money but Curran & Johnson were very reputable and Werner was low man on the bidding totem pole and he really wanted the nursing home. Mrs. Farnum perceived him as an honest and forthright young man and chose him to purchase St. Anne's from her. So at 42 years of age Werner became a nursing home owner, even though he hadn't the foggiest idea of what that entailed. He would soon find out!

Werner had 3 stiff shots of drambuie before he walked in to St. Anne's as the new owner. Carlene remembers Werner walking in. All the aides were hanging out the second floor window

watching him come in from the parking lot. He looked young and scared. They liked his appearance.



Werner sitting at his elegant desk

Werner went down to his office and called together his management staff. Then as he sat on Dr. Farnum's desk twirling the stethoscope that Dr Farnum had around his neck when he died, he said to his staff, "I wonder what the doctor died on?" Don't you know, the staff said in unison, the nursing home killed him! What a start on a new career where the bulk of your capital is invested! (And that is exactly what later happened to Werner – the nursing home killed him too.)

The first year at St. Anne's was a wild one for Werner. He stayed away from the nursing staff, remaining in his office in the basement, a big mistake he was later to find out. He let his nursing staff run the floor unaided by him. He put a nun, Sister Conrad, in charge of the nursing staff. He said she was very intelligent and quite motivated for patient care and he thought she would do real well. But she had absolutely no people skills and she was soon in big trouble with the entire staff. They came to Werner and told him that either he fire Sr. Conrad on the spot or the whole nursing staff was walking out right away. So he reluctantly called Sister to his office and told her the situation. He told her he would rather keep her but there was no way he could run the entire nursing home by himself. So he reluctantly let her go. But it turned out that was not enough for around Christmas a union drive started. He was furious and when told there was a union organizer in the building handing out union material he drank some drambuie then charged up the stairs and grabbed the union organizer by his tie, lifted him off his feet and carried him out to the parking lot and then threw him sprawling to the ground, with all his fliers spread all over the parking lot. The guy got on his feet, flew off the property and was never seen from again.



Astrid & Kurt Diebl

Werner went through a nasty union drive for months on end. He hired Tom Armbruster to help him win the election. Tom took all the aides out to the local bars and they all had a wonderful

time drinking themselves under the table as Tom turned a majority of the girls away from the union and had them become management friendly. On election day Astrid and Kurt were visiting Werner and he had Astrid even vote! But alas, her vote was challenged and didn't count.



Werner Wilhelm showing a victory sign after winning the election

When Werner knew he had won the election he and his sister and her husband took a few days off visiting Niagara Falls before they flew back to Germany. Astrid complained that Werner worked the whole time and they had little time to spend together. But she never understood that union drives are a life and death situation. Werner never had a union at either of his nursing homes. He had a very hard fought union drive at Wil Mar in 1985, but after a year of unbelievable work and stress he won that one too. Werner said over and over again that unionism is communism and he would never continue to hold a place where there was a union involved. He simply would refuse to work in those circumstances.

Werner had other problems in his start up at St. Anne's. He had Mrs. Tankersley as secretary when he took over. She was a relative of Mrs. Farnum, not exceptionally competent and way overpaid. The janitor, also way over paid, was another of their relatives. In short order Werner got rid of them both, saying the wages were way out of line.

St. Anne's was always in some state of pandemonium. People coming and going, buzzers buzzing, phones ringing, water pipes bursting, people asking tons of dumb questions, aides not showing up for work, nurses shooting up on drugs, employees fighting and threatening each other, and Werner bellowing over the stupidity of his staff. I understood why Werner was always so agitated & had a blood pressure of 220/110 and a weight of 290. Not to mention the Health Dept always coming and going.



Werner

Werner was always in high fettle when the Health Dept showed up. Once one of their nurses was on her high horse and went from floor to floor writing up 14 pages of violations on a yellow legal pad. Werner was beside himself with anxiety. So when she was on the 2nd floor with her fanny sticking out of the 2nd floor nurse's station refrigerator, Werner stole and hid the nurse's yellow legal pad. She turned around to write on it again and it was gone! Was she ever furious! She looked everywhere for that pad but it was nowhere to be seen. She figured Werner took it but couldn't prove it. So with her face beet red with anger, she told Werner she would remember every violation she had written down. 4 weeks later the violation report came. Werner pulled out the yellow legal pad and compared the pages, violation by violation. After completing this task, Werner looked up at his staff with a big smile on his face, and stated, "She missed a lot!"

When the Health Dept would come, Werner would run over to the copy machine and pull all the wires. When they would ask for a copy of something he would tell them the machine was broken. When they wanted to take it to a copy place Werner reminded them that no patient charts were allowed to leave the building. Once they hauled in their own copy machine from downtown and made real garbage copies for their own use.

When his bookkeeper Bonnie would see the Health Dept pull into the parking lot she would buzz Werner and all the floors to give them a few minutes warning. Sometimes these few minutes warning saved our derrieres.



Werner vorne Wil Mar Nursing Home in Utica

Werner was building a second story onto the new section of Wil Mar when I met him in 1977. Boy, what a job that was! Not to mention all the construction headaches as they tried to retrofit everything, but also the run ins with the City of Utica and the Health Dept. He got the whole shell up on the second floor when the Utica building inspector said he made a mistake when he approved the building plans, that there should have been an elevator! Werner blew up because

the elevator was a major expense, costing over 35,000 dollars. Werner decided to abandon the project rather than incur such costs. The Health Dept also had to put their 2 cents worth in, making the project that much more complicated and expensive, so to this very day there remains upstairs an empty shell which Werner used for storage in his day.



St. Anne



Werner vorne St. Anne



Werner oben St. Anne



St. Anne



St. Anne

Werner had a very huge building project going on at St. Anne's at the same time. He put an entire 3rd floor on and also added 3 dayrooms and a very large lobby and 2 offices to the first floor. (The little office was later to become mine when I started working there in January 1981.) We have some very impressive pictures of Werner inspecting the project while it was in progress. They put docks plank on the floor of the 3rd story and also on the roof overhead. Then Lee Seymour the plumber had to cut holes through all that cement in order to put the plumbing stacks through to the 3rd floor. Lee worked evenings because the trades used to come to Werner demanding to know if Union trades people were doing the job. Werner would always tell them yes, Lee was union, but in fact Lee was not and therefore worked nights to duck a run in with the union guys which could get ugly. Lee mostly worked by himself and had no need to belong to the union. The block layers were most professional people and they did a superb job. When Andre Vermuellen came to inspect the job at the end he saw why his workers took so long - Werner bought his help a case of beer every day! The electricians, from Chuck Taylor, wanted to kill Lee because he stole their torpedo heater in the evening.

One thing that was not done right at St. Anne's that Werner was not aware of until after Andre Vermuellen and his crew left was the fact that they broke the drain tile that surrounded St. Anne's when they put the day room on. We never knew this or the significance of it until we had a very heavy rain. All of a sudden water started seeping along the inner walls of the basement along the corridor. At times it ran into the physical therapy room and the chapel. Cindy Lerner and I used to grab mops and try to stay ahead of the water. Sooner or later the health dept caught on and demanded that we fix it. Werner called in a plumber and he started busting up the cement in the basement corridor trying to find where to tie into the drain system. Werner had a fit, thinking they wanted to bust up the whole cement, but they soon found what they were looking for and they made a definite improvement, but we still had some water on heavy rainy days.

Another ongoing complaint maker was Werner's incinerator in the furnace room in the basement of St. Anne's. We burned a lot of paper in there but when the staff would burn plastic the stuff would smell and the residue would float all over the neighborhood, landing in people's back yards and swimming pools. They would always end up calling the city inspector who would come out and take a look around. He would tell us to stop burning plastic and would leave again.



Rudi Pitz Werner Wilhelm

Garbage collection became a huge problem when the city of Detroit garbage collectors went on strike and the garbage started piling up in, on and all around the dumpster. It got ripe in no time and then the dogs started ripping it open and carting it all over the place. Werner talked Rudi into helping him cart the garbage away to the dump at a time when he first met the guy. They had to continue doing that until the garbage strike ended. Phew!!



Cindy Lerner

Cindy and I used to do a number of different non-kitchen projects together. She was a very cooperative employee when you treated her right. She was intelligent with a real happy, motivated personality. She was the daughter of Bonnie Lerner, our most competent bookkeeper who ran the front office at the front entrance of St. Anne's. The worst job Cindy and I and a few other employees did together was fog the whole nursing home ahead of the sprayers to kill the cockroaches by bringing them out in the open with the foggers and then they would have a much better chance of being killed dead on the first major spraying. We had to have the company come out and do a major clean out because their weekly spraying wasn't even touching the surface of the problem and the patient's families and the health dept were clamoring for us to do something as the problem was out of control. So Cindy and I grabbed foggers first thing in the morning at 9 am and we fogged straight through with only a quick lunch break till 4 pm. By that time Cindy and I were both sick with rotten headaches from breathing those chemical fumes all day long. But, boy, were we ever successful. We killed over 10,000 cockroaches! (Werner would not allow us to tell this number out loud, but now it's water over the dam). And we made sure those cockroaches that we fogged were good and dead. We each had a fly swatter and we squished every one of those nasty little critters. As for the patients – they were all safe and sound on the roof having a day long picnic in the fresh air far away from the fumes. At the end of the fogging and spraying we opened up all the windows to air the place out before we brought the patients back in.

Cindy and I had more pleasant projects as well. She and I together painted all the walls in the basement. We had a lot of fun doing it and we were both sad that we did not have any artistic ability because we would have loved to have painted trucks and buildings all along the corridor walls with a big semi at the end of the hall coming right at us. Cindy also had a pajama party with her staff during a big snow storm where they all stayed overnight and slept on chairs in the basement. Boy, were they ever all tired out by the end of the next day.

One day Cindy started a new project that greatly enriched the lives of our physical therapy patients. She snuck in a cat into the nursing home. She wandered around all day, out of Werner's way in case he would forbid the cat to remain, then they would toss her out the break room window at night to roam the neighborhood, coming back in at 6 am the next day for food, companionship and sleep. Well, several months later "he" produced a litter of 4 kittens! All orange and white, and most with several extra toes off to one side of their foot. We then put the kittens in the physical therapy room and now patients were eager instead of hesitant to go to their sessions. The kittens were so much fun to watch that they were excited to go every day and watch all the antics of these cute little guys. And oh yes, Werner soon found out about the cat and her brood and it was fine with him. Just keep them within the confines of what is acceptable to the health dept was Werner's only caveat. Soon the kittens were 8 weeks old and Cindy did a fine job of getting them all adopted out, mostly to fellow employees.

Cindy got involved in one other animal escapade a little later that was initiated by Werner. A stray dog came to mom's house and she started feeding it. It would come for food and then drift off again till it was once again hungry. The dog then caused a commotion in the neighborhood by jumping through a neighbor's screen door on Engel in the middle of the night and landing on a pregnant woman's stomach. So the police thinking it was mom's dog told her she would have to keep it confined. She told them it wasn't hers and decided not to feed it anymore so she wouldn't get into any trouble for its escapades. I heard about this when mom said she had Taffy and would only keep one dog. That if Taffy left she would take Sport. Well, naturally Taffy wasn't going anywhere so Sport had to leave. I put Sport in my car and took him over to Werner's. We had no dog of our own at the time. Werner loved dogs and said he could stay out in our courtyard. So I fed Sport and left him outside for the night. It wasn't 5 minutes later that Sport sailed over our 6 foot fence and was wild and free again. He was seen walking across Cass and Auburn roads and the neighbors say he was very savvy about crossing streets, that he observed the cars and waited for an opening before crossing. Well Sport came back for food and Werner fed him and he'd take off again. Then Sport got picked up by animal control and put in the pond. He then got in a fight with another dog and was hurt. Werner went there and tried to bail him out. But he had to pay for shots and medicine and wait 10 days to see if he was disease free as he had no shot record and no license. So 10 days later Werner went and bailed him out and drove him to St. Anne's and Sport stayed in Werner's office for the day. Cindy came in, made a big fuss over the dog and then said the dog needed a bath. So off Sport went with Cindy for a thorough scrubbing in one of the patient's bathtubs and then at the end of the bath she sprayed his tail with perfume then brought him back to Werner's office. We all made a big fuss over how clean he was and how good he smelled but every time he wagged his tail Werner's whole office smelled like, well, I'll let Werner tell it in his own words, "It smelled like a French whorehouse!" (Werner said perfume and cologne were for people who didn't bathe regularly so they could use the scent to cover up their own smell.) Well, after work Werner told me we had a meeting at Al Kavan's a

bar and grill around the corner on Houston-Whittier, about a mile from St. Anne's. He told me to go ahead in my car that he would bring Sport in his car. After the meeting I found there was no dog in Werner's car. What happened to Sport? I asked. Oh that damn dog! Werner replied. I opened up my car door and told him to get in and he wouldn't. He just started walking down Cadieux heading for Chandler Park drive. Well, that's the last we ever saw or heard of Sport.



Hari Mali

After the construction was completed Werner needed beds and furniture for his newly completed 3rd floor at St. Anne's. It was a truly beautiful addition when it was completed. Beautiful large rooms, big airy windows letting in lots of light and beautiful tile on the floor. Werner did choose very attractive color combinations for his newly completed floors. But when it was time to get beds Werner again saved lots of money by attending quite a number of hospital and nursing home auctions and bidding on the used beds and furniture. Boy were those auctions ever a circus, right up Werner's alley! We would look over all the furniture and beds and decide which was the best for what he wanted to pay. He would get his bidding paddle, pay down his earnest money and we were off to the races! He would tend to bid on the second or third lot of the same merchandise figuring the largest bids would happen first. Sometimes this was so, but often not. Once he and Mali were bidding against each other and so he told Mali there was more merchandise down the hall of the same quality so stop bidding on this lot. The auctioneer sternly told Werner that such collusion in bidding was against the law so stop trying it. We always got what Werner set out to get, usually at the price he wanted to pay or thereabouts. The problem would come when you came to pick up the merchandise and someone stole part of your lot. That happened a lot. Werner needed a semi to move all the stuff we bought from the long term care county medical facility in Mason, Michigan that closed down. So Tom Armbruster found someone to drive the truck – a Vietnam veteran friend of his with a commercial driver's license. He didn't cost that much but needed to be paid in cash. The hitch? He had lost both of his legs in the war and was driving this rig with a double prosthesis where his legs used to be. Werner also hired a bunch of guys he got from the Detroit unemployment office. I drove in the semi with the guy with no legs. Boy, was I ever nervous! That was a lot of clutch and gas pedal and brake pedal maneuvering for a guy with no legs! It was a real rough ride on a really old dilapidated semi but we made it there in one piece.



Doug Bender

We spent the whole day loading beds and bedside tables and over bed tables that we had purchased. We then looked around and Werner saw some between beds curtains that no one had claimed. We were the last persons to remove our stuff and this was the last day so Werner had me run around removing all the curtains from between the beds and loading them into his car. At the very end Werner also saw a piano just sitting on the loading area so he had the guys load that into the semi too. We had 2 or 3 loads that day, stacking all the beds on end to get as many as possible into the semi trailer. The guys were totally exhausted at the end of the day. The next day a really funny thing happened to those day laborers. They had to report to my brother Doug who was their probation officer and Doug and I had just been talking about the big move so when Doug saw all the bruises on those guys arms he said, "I see you were loading beds all day yesterday." Those guys freaked, never figuring out how Doug knew that. The furniture looked really nice at St. Anne's on the new 3rd floor. We even had some left over to replace the older beds on the other floors. Werner then took the best of the replaced beds from St. Anne's over to Wil Mar and then replaced the worst looking beds at Wil Mar. Once we bought 2 new electric beds for Wil Mar just before the union fiasco and the union drive members threw the controls away, making the beds useless.

Plumbing pipes used to burst too, usually on very cold days. One time Werner had 2 to 3 feet of water in the basement before he built the addition. His office carpet got inundated and after a week it started stinking like the dickens, but Werner was attached to the carpet and wanted to keep it. His secretary Maxine Parrish had enough of all that mold and so one day when Werner came to work he found the carpet cut into many pieces and thrown out his office window. He was so angry over that he recounted this story many times over the years. MUCH LATER Werner could see the humor in it, but not at the time!

When I first started working at St. Anne's we got a call at 4 am that the pipe burst in the kitchen and water was flowing into the corridor. So Werner and I threw our clothes on and pony expressed ourselves down there. It was a huge 3 inch pipe in the janitor's closet on the outside wall that had burst and we had mucho water in the kitchen. Werner found the shut off valve and that was the end of that until the maintenance man came to work and replaced the pipe.

Werner was real handy with a pipe wrench, which he had to be running those ADC apartments on Fort St in Detroit. Werner also bragged that he knew how to "wipe a joint" to stop a leak in a lead pipe. (Werner's apartments all had lead pipes so when they developed a hole in the pipe, you would heat up the section around the hole and then take a rag and wipe the surrounding lead into the hole to seal it up.) He said when you tell people today that Werner used to wipe a joint they would think he was smoking marijuana.



St. Anne roof top party

Werner had many parties at St. Anne's. They were usually held in his office and spilled out up and down the basement hallway. Werner was always in fine fettle at these parties but unknown to the participants it did take a lot out of him. He usually had a few drinks at the beginning of the party to bolster his ego, then he was off and running. Afterwards he would hit his bed in total exhaustion. Often his old girlfriends would drop in and socialize with him at these parties. Once his old girlfriend Barbara Waldo showed up at the party with her fiancé. She sat at Werner's conference room table for over an hour obviously comparing Werner with her fiancé. Another time we have a picture of Werner sitting on the couch being mauled by two women and sitting on the same couch looking extremely discomfited was Sister Mary Esther! (She was my 5th grade teacher, the finest teacher I ever had). It's a small world, huh?



Werner, Judy Oust and her father Mr. Oust

Judy Oust and her father used to play the piano on the 3rd floor of St. Anne's during the Christmas party. Werner really enjoyed listening to the music and really admired their piano playing abilities. Judy was much too delicate for Werner but he did like her as a person and respected her artistic abilities. She was employed at an ad agency downtown and her job was to help create ads. She designed Werner's St. Anne brochure that he passed out to prospective families. Her slogan was "we care for whom you care about". Judy was a fine poet. One day she gave Werner a book of published poems. She was so very proud because her poem was in this book. In reading the poem I have often wondered if her poem was written about her feelings for Werner.



The first September, 1977, we went to a nursing home conference at Boyne Mountain together. We stayed in the old Lodge instead of the new condos because Werner was sentimental about the Lodge. (It probably cost less too.) We had a very happy time there and I had a date for a tennis match with some of the women from another nursing home. I lounged around the grounds as Werner attended the meetings as I did not yet work in the nursing home. At 2 am we got a call from a very drunk Tom Armbruster who had just rolled in from the local bar. He said it was raining hard and there was no roof over the 3rd floor of St. Anne's so the water was running down the walls of the second floor bedrooms and someone had called the health dept and Mrs. Shott said she was going to take the patients out if the problem was not corrected immediately. So Werner and I packed up immediately and drove home all night. Werner was so mad at Tom for not taking care of the problem himself, or at least telling Werner at 4 pm so he could have called someone to take care of the problem so he would not have to leave the conference. We have some nice pictures from that mini work vacation.



Werner, Bear & van at Boyne Mountain

We also went to a conference in Boyne Mt on another occasion. We had dinner over the other side of the mountain in a fine dining lodge. They wouldn't let Werner in the main dining room because he was dressed in shorts so we ate outside on long banquet tables, which was fine with both of us, except that Werner was miffed at not being allowed to remain inside. Anyway, Werner forgot something and drove back to his room and he wanted me to stay and hold a place for the 2 of us, which I did. I sat at the far end of one table and other nursing home owner-operators sat at the other end. While I was sitting there their conversation started drifting my way. I was shocked and disgusted – they were talking about “did you get the snow white for tonight's party?” They then continued using many other references to street drugs which I found disgusting. What if the police should raid the conference and the nursing home owners using drugs got into the newspapers! About 5 years later one of them died in his forties and they said that he died from being burned out on drugs. He burned the candle at both ends, was their comment on his early demise. The same year another one of the Administrators in that crowd of users was high while riding a snowmobile on Houghton Lake during Tip Up Town festivities in the middle of the night, crashed into another snowmobiler and is forever brain damaged. The last I heard they were teaching him to dress and feed himself.

Then later a 3rd member of that group was shot in an alley after a sexual tryst and died trying to drive away in his car. That was a very sad and scandalous story. Paul Kosnic was a Catholic priest for a number of years and then left the priesthood to marry a nun. They had 4 children and then Paul got a divorce. Paul then dated Gail Hill, a wild gal with children from a previous marriage.. He later married Gail. Paul then got a job as an Administrator at the nursing home at Connor and Warren Aves in Detroit, a really rough area. He left the nursing home at 7 pm one evening and went to Gail's house and had dinner with his step daughter and her black girlfriend. After dinner he talked the black girl into having sex for pay. She agreed, told him they were to go to her house in inner city Detroit. He drove her there. She told him to park in the alley behind her home. He did. She and another girl stabbed him in the chest. He put the car in gear and started driving away down the alley. He got about 3 houses down when he exsanguinated and passed out. The black girl pushed his body back in the seat, jumped on his lap, and sitting on the dead man drove the car away. She was later caught and charged but many people in the nursing home industry looked very funny at Gail, figuring she was the one behind the whole dirty mess. Gail filed the papers to collect on Paul's life insurance from his new job. She got the shock of her life – it was denied – his policy would have gone into effect in a few hours, it would not go into effect until after midnight. Either very bad luck or rotten miscalculation. You take your pick.

Several more members of the nursing home group played hardball, some even were reputed to have ties with the Mafia. I often urged Werner to steer far clear of those guys, which he usually did, but once in a while a business deal would just look too good to Werner and he would nose in with these fellows and toy with putting a business deal together. He tried to complete a deal with Cook and Pete Bellanca. That made me very nervous. I told Werner he would never get a good deal out of these sharks. Werner soon realized that and backed off. But once Werner gave them a \$10,000 earnest money deposit which they refused to return when the deal fell apart. Werner told the judge he wanted his \$10,000 back. When the judge refused Werner told the judge he was going to go to the attorney general and tell him about the crooked deal the judge was pulling. The judge gave Werner a very angry look that said he would kill him if he could, but he quickly refunded the \$10,000 to keep Werner from going to the attorney general.

An interesting contact Werner had in his early nursing home days was his nursing home attorney, Dave Lebenbom. Mr. Lebenbom held himself up as the most knowledgeable attorney in regard to nursing home matters. He attended many a nursing home meeting and coerced the owners into filing class action law suits against the state to procure more favorable nursing home reimbursement. The nursing home association would collect thousands of dollars from most of the nursing homes on a regular basis and give them a thumb nail sketch of the progress of the law suit in question. In the end none of these lawsuits ever went to trial, for when the State felt that they might lose they simply changed the reimbursement system to incorporate what Lebenbom wanted and the whole law suit became a moot issue. We got nothing backwards, just a new system going forward.

When I first took over the ownership of Wil Mar Lebenbom induced Werner and me to sue the State because they did not pay me for the new nurse they demanded on the afternoon shift that Werner did not install until the deadline for a one time reimbursement was past. (Werner did not trust the State to reimburse for new items as they promised so he never installed the new people

or programs or physical plant items until after the fact to protect himself against having to pay for things they might later renege on for payment.) We went forward with the lawsuit which Lebenbom told Werner was sure to pass. It didn't. It bombed right off. Lebenbom did not handle the case. He gave it to his new junior, and I do mean junior, partner, Andy Rothman. I call Rothman "one shot Rothman" because he had only arrow in his quiver and when he shot this arrow he was done. He had no back up plan. He was riding on Lebenbom's coat tails. I told Werner I was never impressed with Dave either. First Dave and some hot shot nursing home owners of the old school would dream up a reimbursement system. Then these owners knew just how to milk the system they set up to their own advantage, then when the rest of the nursing home owners would catch on the State would change the rules and then Lebenbom would dream up a fancy lawsuit to circumvent the new system. After Werner died Dave tried to start a new class action lawsuit, but this time most of the old guard owners were retired or dead and the new generation had watched the old game and were smart enough not to get sucked into it.

Lebenbom and Werner had a very interesting relationship going when I first met Werner and would go to the law office with him. Lebenbom truly admired and respected Werner for being a self made man and he would repeatedly refer to Werner as "the Renaissance man" because he said Werner was truly a self made man and had many interesting facets to his personality, and was brilliant beyond measure.

Lebenbom and Morris Brenner were Werner's main attorneys for most of his nursing home days. Both men were very interesting and very brilliant people. Both were cunning and were very creative in their billing. Werner always got into a hassle with these two over their bills. But one thing really struck Werner and me about these two men. Both very brilliant men, they both had sons that were not even marginally competent. The sons did not hold a candle to their fathers. Morris' 2 sons became attorneys and they were not able to answer even a simple question without asking daddy first. Lebenbom brought his 18 year old son to the nursing home conference at Boyne Mt and he shows up in blue jeans and a raggy shirt for a formal dinner on the lake. He then brings his camera with him and says he loves to take pictures but he can only take them in black and white as he cannot afford color film! What an embarrassment to his wealthy father!



The \$485 blooka blooka van

A few years later we returned to Boyne Mountain for another nursing home conference. Werner had told everyone he would be coming up with his new van. Everyone who knew him was very excited about his new van as Werner never bought a new car, he always drove something quite bedraggled. So several of his friends were standing at the curb when we arrived in our "new" van - a 1980 model with the fenders flapping in the breeze and the van went "blooka blooka" when

you drove it, and when you went fast it made a loud “bzzshrr” because it had a cracked manifold. Everybody just stood there with their mouths hanging open. Werner never even noticed their consternation - he was so proud of the deal he got on that car - he paid only \$485.00 for it and would have put 1000 miles on it by the time we got home. My main concern? - I was afraid we were going to get asphyxiated from all the carbon monoxide flowing out of that cracked manifold. Was my secondary concern loss of face? Nope. By this time I was well into standing by and watching Werner’s first class circus performance.

The second night we had a fine dinner in the main dining room with Hari and his wife. During dinner Werner showed his displeasure over something said by howling like a coyote, which he did extremely well. This sent Carlene into fits of laughter. Carlene and Hari went back to their rooms first, and later we traversed the corridor where their room was located. As we walked along the corridor we heard a very strange sound - Carlene was sitting in the bathtub of their room howling like a coyote! Werner heard this, cocked his head for a minute, then when he realized it was Carlene he threw back his head and gave his very best coyote howl in return. Carlene howled with laughter when she heard Werner. To Werner it was just business as usual. When you hear a coyote call, you give one in return.

We had Bear with us on this trip. We have some very nice pictures of Werner and Bear by the water wheel at Boyne. We’d leave him in the room with a do not disturb sign on the door, and I would run back and walk him 5 times a day. He was a well behaved dog.

Later we went to a nursing home conference at Schuss Mt resort. We brought our teenage puppy, truly Bear with us. He stayed in the hotel room while we went to the meetings. He was a pretty good little fellow while we were gone but he had one big problem. We wormed him just before going to the conference and when he went outside the room I was shocked at the huge number of live worms squiggling around in his feces. That had to be really hard on his health. He played by the pond with Werner and me fetching sticks in the water. I would playfully throw him into the deep water and he would swim back to us. We had a wonderful time with him. He also was very interested in the geese swimming in the pond but they were too far out for him to chase.

We also would go to nursing home meetings locally, usually held at area hotels. The other Administrators and Directors of Nursing would aggravate Werner as they were miles apart in their thinking. They would always put on a false veneer of sophistication and try to act more than they were in Werner’s estimation. Werner always said that many people try to appear more than they are but that he was always taught in Germany “to be more than you appear”. That certainly was the case with Werner. He was far and away a much more valuable and brilliant person than his outward appearance would indicate. His greatest aggravation was when they would drink 2 or 3 drinks apiece and then decide that they would split the bill evenly. Werner had many an earnest discussion over this rendering of the group bill. But he was voted down and they would split the bill. Werner then said to me that I was to order the most expensive thing on the menu and even to order 2 expensive dinners if I thought I could get them both down. He was furious over having to pay some one else’s bar tab. He was always so proud of me when I didn’t drink and would say so in public when asked what he and I would like to drink. Werner was afraid of a woman drinking alcohol, afraid that the drinking and the behavior would get out of control.

Werner also had an annoying habit when he would attend one of these meetings or seminars. In the middle of the speech or seminar he would get up, go to the public phone and then start hollering in a very loud voice at whomever he was talking to. He had a booming voice in the best of circumstances and it would carry back into the conference room and just about drown out the speaker. Surprisingly, no one ever told him to keep it down, beside me, that is.

Werner always carried his flip flop metal phone directory with him wherever he would go. He had an inexpensive vinyl briefcase that he would carry his directory, his important papers and whatever he needed for that day, including small maintenance parts. Later after his prostate hypertrophy got out of control, he also carried his catheter with him in a little compact case. He spent a lot of time shopping for just the right case for his catheter and settled on a German round soap plastic case. Later he carried this case in his pants pocket. His phone directory was vital to him. He carried it with him everywhere, he could not get along without it. Once we had to fly to Buffalo in an emergency because Werner couldn't urinate on his own any more and as we parked the car his directory fell out of the car and onto the pavement of the airport parking lot. He called Rudi that night when he saw it was gone and Rudi went to the airport and retrieved it for him. In the back of this directory Werner had a number of numbers written in a thinly disguised code so people would not know who these people were. One of them was Beatrice. On the front page of that directory written in very big letters was "\$100 reward for return of this phone directory."

Werner always referred to the health department as the American communists. Sue Keester, Grace La Rocca and Phyllis De Yonker used to laugh at him when he said this in a public meeting. But as the saying goes, every dog has his day, so when the Health Dept started picking on them there was a direct newspaper quote from these people that the health dept was a bunch of communists. When I read this in the local Detroit News I took it immediately to Werner who read it and was not surprised that that was said. Sooner or later they all learn the truth, he said.



Werner trapping bees with a cup

Werner always seemed to act up at meetings, especially nursing home meetings. Once he walked into a nursing home meeting with lip stick kisses all over his face from Toni. And he always got up and said something outrageous that would cause the whole group to roll their eyes. And he loved to roast the health dept employees at these meetings whenever he had just suffered a bad survey. Once right after I had had my mastectomy we went to a nursing home seminar at a Detroit Hospital on Jefferson. It was a beautiful July day and the seminar was held on the lawn of the hospital. Soon after we sat down bees started swarming around us. I had just been told never to get a bee sting on my right arm as I have no lymph nodes and it could be fatal. So the bees scared me to death, especially considering that I still had the metal clips in place and was in a lot of pain and just didn't need any more aggravation at this point. So I told Werner to do something

about the bees. He had no interest in the bees and at first just ignored me. I became insistent. Werner studied a bee flying around us, picked up a cup of punch, drank the punch in one gulp, turned the cup upside down, studied the flight of the bumblebee, then carefully dropped the cup over the bee and dropped the cup with the bee inside down on the table. He then did this 6 more times, trapping 7 bees in small empty cups. I eyed those cups nervously for the rest of the day. At the end of the day as we were getting up to leave Werner upended all of those cups turning all the bees loose. Boy, did I ever get out of there as fast as I could.



Sandy Wilhelm

But that wasn't the worst of his behavior that day. We just had a bad survey with Jean Jackson a few weeks before and he wanted so very bad to get even with her. All members of the health dept both from Detroit and Lansing were there that day, including all of the big shots. And many of them black and very close friends of Jean Jackson. I'm going to tell them all about how bad Jean Jackson is, Werner told me. Oh no! I said. Don't you dare do that. You'll get us into more trouble than we can ever handle, I warned him. Didn't matter to him, he wanted to spout off against Jean and he was about to get it off his chest. NO! I said. YES! Was Werner's reply. I put one of my hands over his mouth and the other on his belt to hold him down. Up he pops with my hand falling away from his mouth and my other hand up in the air holding onto his belt. And does he ever rant against Jean Jackson in front of all these people – health department and other nursing home administrators and Directors of Nursing. The new comers from other nursing homes can be seen with their eyes popping out of their heads with astonishment. They are sure that this guy just chopped his own head off as far as nursing home ownership is concerned. And as for the health dept reaction? A small smile on their lips -- there goes Wilhelm spouting off again. What Werner says at these meetings and at the nursing home surveys will be repeated over and over again by all members of the health dept at their luncheons and in house meetings, and will be regaled and embellished with greater glee with each retelling. "Those goddamn American communist bastards" seems to be one of their favorite of Werner's famous sayings against them. Mrs. Shott, the head of the Health Dept in Detroit, admits she has a real soft spot in her heart for Werner. "I understand Wilhelm, she says, my father was a German and was just like him". I think she had a bit of a crush on him. Werner thought so too. Carleen asked them why they let Wilhelm get away with such outrageous behavior. Because he's Wilhelm was the reply. But you'd crucify me if I tried that, she would say. You're darn right we would was the reply. WHY, then? "Because he's Wilhelm and you're not" was their answer.

In 1977 Werner was so upset with the Health Dept at Wil Mar that he was at stroke level with his blood pressure, 220/110 and he called them every name he could think of, God damn fucking

American communist bastards was his favorite moniker. Being I didn't hardly know him, I was wondering if he was a little off balanced the way he would vehemently cuss them out for hours at a time, all with a beet red face. But when I later realized how serious the problem was and how fascist the Health Dept could be, I realized that his reaction to the situation was more than appropriate. Werner bought Wil Mar in 1974 at the urging of his CPA Morris Bernstein, who told him that Wil Mar was for sale. Werner was very unsure about buying this nursing home as it was very old and had many Health Dept violations. But Morris told him that if he hung on to it for 2 years he would break even and if he could keep it open longer he would make a good profit. So after much indecision Werner decided to take a gamble. He purchased Wil Mar from Dr. and Helen Hirth on December 31, 1974. Mrs. Hirth was so relieved to be rid of Wil Mar that she went out to Birmingham and bought herself a fine new dress. Dr. & Mrs Hirth then packed up and moved to Arizona with their children Bill & Margaret Le Moyne. It gave their son Bill a new start as he had quite a reputation in Utica as he was a very active peeping Tom and neighbors were always calling the police on him. He always got away scot free because of his parents' sterling reputation in the community. Dr. Hirth had originally had his practice in a fine building at the north east corner of Cass and Summers, where he lived and had his dental practice. When he retired he moved to his newly built apartment attached to 3 other apartments on Brownell, just south of Cass. The doctor had his bedroom and bath in the basement, Mrs. Hirth, her daughter and her son slept in the bedrooms upstairs.

The apartment belonging to the Hirths which in 1972 became Werner's residence is a very fine home. It was built in 1949 and 1950 by Marvin Stadler, who was 17 at the time and his father and grandfather, all of whom are excellent finished carpenters. The Hirths built these 4 apartments on Brownell behind the nursing home. Their apartment had a driveway on Cass Ave, the other three apartments exited on Brownell.

When Werner took over he in effect had two nursing homes because he turned the apartments in the back into nursing home beds and the old main white building in the front held the rest of the patients. He had to have two nurses on the day shift and two sets of aides because the 2 buildings were not connected. There was an open air courtyard between the two. It was about in 1976 that the Health Dept came down on Wil Mar Gestapo style. There were changes they wanted Dr. & Mrs. Hirth to make that these two thought were asinine. They told the Health Dept that Wil Mar had been operating just fine since the 1930's just the way they were and there was no need to change. The dirty and clean utility rooms and the day room was the chief bone of contention with the Health Dept. So in 1977 they storm trooped the place and said they were going to close it down. Mr Wilcox came into Wil Mar with a closure order in his hand. He asked for the Administrator (which was Werner). Werner said he was gone for the day. Wilcox then asked for the Director of Nursing. Werner said she was also gone. Wilcox then asked who was in charge here. Werner said, I guess me, the maintenance man. Werner then grabbed a very soaking wet mop out of a bucket full of cold, dirty water and started slopping the running water over the floor, and then mopping the water everywhere, and he started mopping toward Wilcox, mopping the wet, dirty water over and into his shoes and over the cuffs of his suit pants. Wilcox backed up, and Werner kept mopping at his legs. Wilcox stepped out of the door and Werner grabbed his keys and locked the nursing home door. The next day the social worker from the local social services office came to take down the names of the patients and their relatives to move the patients. Werner commanded Mrs Hefferon, the Nursing Director to stay right on that social

worker and make life impossible for her. Mrs Hefferon did a splendid job. The social worker gave up, saying she could not work under these circumstances. Werner then took the social worker to his home, sat her down in his living room and tried to make friends with her. Werner then ran to a very good lawyer, Van Deusen, who the Hirth's had used, and seeing that he was not going to save the nursing home with his tactics, Werner went to Dykema, Gossett, Goodnow and Trigg as they only had 4 days to work before the closure hearing in Lansing was scheduled. Dykema Gossett cost \$10,000 for 4 days, but they sure got the job done in the most splendid of manners. They called up all the relatives, hired a bus, and drove most of the relatives of the patients to Lansing in a bus, where they all testified as to what good care their relatives were receiving at Wil Mar. Those who couldn't come wrote glowing letters of praise for the nursing home. It worked, Dykema Gossett showed how Wil Mar had no nursing violations and the judge granted a stay so the nursing home could remain open to give Werner time to complete the renovations the health dept wanted. Werner was sweating bullets. What if he spent all that money on renovations and the health dept shut the nursing home down anyway? But Werner jumped right in with both feet, added a new day room, a clean and dirty utility room, and then due to his genius, he added room 11 with 4 beds, turned a garage into 4 bedrooms, creating room 10, and then built onto the new nursing station an annex from the old building to the new building adding 2 common bathrooms, and a private room, 12 and a 4 bed room, #13, and a 2 bedroom, # 14, thus adding 15 beds in the middle, and then he made a new corridor in the back and pushed out rooms 15 - 18, thus adding a bed to each of these rooms. Werner always had a Midas touch for making money. He was a brilliant business man, and a brilliant investor. He always had that special touch for making the best of any financial situation. He also had guts, par excellence! He would boldly shove forward where other men were too meek to tread. No one could ever accuse Werner of being shy or retiring! He was always in the forefront where ever he was, whatever he was doing. He was always a man of action. He'd have a horrible time making a decision, but once he made it, he was always full speed ahead, damn the torpedoes! He knew how to get the best out of his help too. When he needed something, he could charm the birds out of the trees, and when someone needed to be motivated, he knew how to scream their sox off, and just before they were ready to quit, he would again become the lovable teddy bear and everyone would wonder how they could ever have been angry at that dear man.

He also had another brilliant maneuver which he used liberally with me as well as those who came before me. When things were real hot, he sent me to the fore to take the brunt of the beating while he would stand way back and analyze the situation. Good strategy on his part, but it sure took a lot of starch out of me!

The building program at Wil Mar took a lot out of Werner. He had Marvin Stadler do a significant portion of that work and Marvin was very grateful to get that work as a recession was in full force and Marvin's finished carpentry work had pretty much dried up at that time, so Werner's work kept body and soul together for the Stadler families. Werner got the steel and block from Theut products in Mt Clemens and Andre did the block work with his crew. The plumbing was done by Lee Seymour. He was a good plumber but sure could have some slippery ways at times. Electrical was done by Chuck Taylor. He had to put in a sprinkler system throughout the old and new buildings and he had to put in a very complicated call system that went from each bedside to the nurse's station. Every time it would break down we would call

only Chuck as a person not familiar with the system might mess it up. We have a picture of Werner up on the roof of room 11 at Wil Mar discussing the job with the Stadlers.

Werner had another Health Dept meeting in Lansing when his 9 months were up and the job was not yet complete. The judge looked over the progress and decided to extend the finish date as significant progress had been made. This sure was a relief for Werner. He had been sweating bricks after all the money he had put into the project.



Otto Brehmer



Henny Hettenhausen & Otto Brehmer

Werner and Wilcox always remained enemies after that. In 1991 we had another crisis after the fire in the nursing home and had to go to Lansing for a hearing. After the hearing Werner walked to his car in the Health Dept parking lot. What a miserable winter day that was - it was snowing very heavily. The car was covered with snow and visibility was horrible. Werner got in the car and just then Wilcox walked behind Werner's car. Should I run him over?! Should I run him over!?!?! Werner shouted to me repeatedly. No one would know it was not an accident, Werner contempORIZED. Oh, God no!! I said. Werner was within a hair's breath of running the guy over. This brought me back to the story Werner told me where he and his uncle Otto Brehmer had made a pact to hit the arch communist Rotfuss over the head with a 2 by 4 as he walked in the dark in Bremen. It was only Aunt Henny and Dr. Werner who held the 2 men back that time.

Werner got some adverse press coverage at that time, from the local newspaper. Werner saved those stories. I was upset when I went to the local library because they had that story in their file, but none of the good stories about Wil Mar. The city was rather unfriendly to us in those days. We had to sue them in 1986 to get their attention and get them to back down and respect us. During the lawsuit the press was somewhat friendly to us which they had not been earlier. Werner had charmed the local reporter. Suing the city was a really good idea for it calmed them right down. They dared not cause any trouble while the law suit was pending and by the time the law suit was settled the political climate in Utica was turning for the better. One outrageous incident of this whole lawsuit fiasco was a lawyer who was serving on the Utica city council. Werner had hired that lawyer in 1975 to help him get approvals from the city for his construction project which the lawyer was able to do as he was friends with the city. Then in 1986 this lawyer, Fred Cross, used the information he had gathered while he was Werner's attorney to use against him in the city dispute. Werner then sued the lawyer for this and when the lawyer was served with the lawsuit he called up Werner, screaming at him at the top of his lungs, telling Werner that he was coming right over and he was going to murder him! Nice lawyer.



Sandy wearing the rope bracelet & Werner

For Valentine's Day in 1977 Werner gave me a choice of two beautiful bracelets – both heavy 14 carat gold ones. I chose the one with 3 ropes together and ID type blank bar in the middle. Werner was sad that I didn't chose the other one as it contained much more gold and was a better value. Later I wish I had taken the other one. A sad ending to this story – in 1979 I was in Penny's shopping when my coat sleeve knocked the bracelet off my arm and it fell to the floor. I saw a woman stoop down, pick something up, put in her pocket and run away. After thinking about her actions, I suddenly decided to check my wrist and the bracelet was gone. I looked everywhere and then reported it to the lost and found but it was never recovered. I had known the clasp was acting up that day, but Werner was treating me so awful that out of hurt and agitation I did not remove the bracelet.



Werner Wilhelm II



Werner & Sandy Wilhelm, Oestern Sonntag, 1977

Easter of 1977 was a fun one. I lived at 28558 Dino Circle in Chesterfield Township in those days. On Easter Sunday Werner came out on that very cold, dreary snowy day and in his trunk he had a beautiful PUCH moped for me. He took it out and road himself around the circle. Boy, did I ever love that MOPED. I drove many a mile on that motor bike. I even carried a gas can on the carrier so I could ride long distances without running out of gas.

In the spring of 1977 I got the scare of my life as the weather service said there was a tornado spotted in our area, and boy, did the sky ever look like a tornado was coming. We were living in tornado alley in that sub. Prior to our moving there a huge tornado came right through the land we were living on and hurt and killed many people. So I called up Werner on the phone and talked to him until the tornado came and went. He was always a solid rock in my life, someone you could lean on and depend on in times of genuine crisis.



Sandy & Werner Wilhelm II

For my birthday in 1977 Werner gave me a very fine rope necklace. Then for Christmas that year he bought me a fine pendant to go on the heavy rope necklace. I immediately tried to put the pendant on the necklace but the loop on the pendant was too small so I had to take it to a jeweler to have it enlarged. It then fit and looked very elegant. The nugget pendant looked very fine. It had a heart in it, a gazelle, and an L shape.

For Valentine's Day in 1978 he gave me another bracelet – a chain bracelet that is brushed on one side and smooth on the other.

Right after I met Werner he wanted to get a new mortgage on St. Anne's to pay for the 3rd floor and dayroom additions he was putting on the nursing home. He applied at various institutions and found out that he could get a substantial reduction on the interest if he had key man insurance with the bank as beneficiary should he die. But then he found out that due to the fact that he weighed 290 lbs no one wanted to insure his life. First he called his brother in law Kurt in Germany and asked him to stand in for him to get a physical. The brother in law declined, also saying that he had a bad heart and also could not pass a physical and besides it was unspoken that a man of his standing was never about to do something like that. So as a last resort Werner decided to go on a crash diet, and diet he did! For six months almost all he ate was one pound of codfish for every meal. And he stuck to this diet religiously from February, 1977 to August, 1977. In August he weighed in at 238 lbs, had and passed his physical and got his key man insurance at a tolerable cost. He then returned to his normal diet and promptly regained all of his lost weight, once again weighing in at 290 lbs.

After all that problem the health dept then put the screws to him, refusing to allow the key man insurance premiums, even though this would cost them far less than an inflated interest rate on this new mortgage. Werner appealed this decision, and for years this law suit languished on in the court in Lansing. Just before it was due to go to court the State changed its policy and allowed the life insurance premiums, making Werner's law suit moot after all the time, effort and money he had put into it, defending his position.



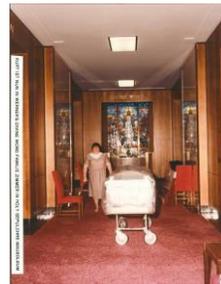
Gerti Naue Wilhelm

In February of 1977 my cousin Debra Dahl got married and Werner and I went to the wedding. It was a very sad, somber day for Werner as his Aunt Gertie, Kurt's wife lay dying in

Derenburg/Saale, Germany. Werner had talked to her on the phone last night. She had told him she was so very weak she couldn't get out of bed. She tried so hard to get back up but couldn't. Werner tried to console her, but there were no words that would comfort her at this point. She was only 67 years old. She lay dying of lung cancer, contracted because she had smoked like a chimney all of her adult life. Werner said that when he was a little boy he used to collect her and Uncle Erhard's cigarette packages to accumulate points to get prizes. All the adults in her family, including Kurt and Dr. Wilhelm, used to beg Gerti to give up cigarettes, to no avail. And now she lay dying from their effects on her body, and she was sorry she had smoked, but now it was way too late for anything to be done about it. (Uncle Erhard did not suffer from the effects of smoking. The war took care of that problem for him. He perished in action in Russia.) Mutti was told her sister was dying, so she hopped a train and went into East Germany to be with her sister in her last moments. Mutti got there late on the day before Gerti died. Right after Mutti got there the communist health dept showed up and assessed Gerti's condition which they determined to be terminal. The communist doctor gave the order and the communist nurse grabbed a vial and started filling a syringe. Mutti, who had been a nurse in Dr. Wilhelm's practice for years and years, immediately recognized the medication in the vile and she started screaming that they couldn't give that to her, that that dose was a fatal one. The health dept pulled her kicking and screaming out of Gerti's bedroom, administered the medication and by morning Gerti was dead. Werner received this sad news in the wee hours of the morning as Germany is 6 hours ahead of us. When Gerti died, Uncle Kurt called Werner and asked permission to bury Gerti in Dr. Wilhelm's family plot, but Werner would not give permission, and neither would Astrid. They both assumed that Werner might bury his mother in that plot some day. So Uncle Kurt knew that no answer was also an answer so he bought a 2 person plot for himself and Gerti across from Dr Wilhelm's plot in the Stadt Friedhof Kassel. There were some hard feelings over that decision, both on Uncle Kurt's part and on Werner and Astrid's part. Astrid also had another fear – that Werner would bury his mother in with her father and Mutti in this 3 person grave. Astrid often asked Werner that question when he visited her in Muhldorf. Uncle Kurt was never buried next to his first or his second wife. He came to America to Werner and me when he knew he was dying and he asked Werner to bury him in Michigan. Which is what we did. First we entombed him in the Woodmere cemetery at 8 Mile and Woodward, then after Werner died I moved Uncle Kurt to Werner's family room in Holy Sepulchre.



Onkel Kurt's Sarg in Woodlawn Friedhof



Onkel Kurt's Sarg in Holy Sepulchre Friedhof

In Werner's extended family all burials were very unsatisfactory in nature because due to the communist takeover of East Germany everyone had to flee their homeland and live in a town that was foreign and unfriendly in their eyes. Dr. Wilhelm would normally be buried in Naumburg with his parents and grandparents and sister and cousins, as would Uncle Kurt. Mama Martha would have been buried on Zschippach in the village cemetery or in Lehnstedt with her father.



Henny Brehmer

Uncle Otto and Aunt Henny Brehmer would have been buried in the village cemetery on Lehnstedt. The descendents of Otto Paul Eschenbach would have been buried in the Tunschütz cemetery in Tunschütz. Families that have lived in East Germany since before 1526 are now scattered all over the face of Germany and even into America due to World War II and the subsequent invasion and take over by the Russian communists. Werner and his extended family not only lost all their worldly possessions in 1945 but also their final resting place.



Sandy & Werner Wilhelm II

On August 19, 1977 Werner and I went to my cousin Tommy's house on Vincent Trail for a Dahl family gathering. We have some nice pictures of Werner and I playing Jarts that day. These pictures show that Werner was down to 238 lbs. Believe me, it was not because he wanted to impress the girls. But he was happy with the fact that it was better for his health.

In the summer of 1977 the neighbors on the street directly behind St. Anne's threw a block party up and down the street and Werner went there in order to make friends with the neighbors so they wouldn't cause trouble for St. Anne's. He never liked to go to these things alone so he invited me, Tom Armbruster along with his wife and son. The son was severely undersized and definitely had some sort of genetic dwarfism. The wife was taking the child for medical treatment to increase his size. Shortly after that they got a divorce and Tom refused to pay child support for the child, saying that he was totally sterile since childhood so the child was not his. The neighbors at the block party did not receive us too well. They did not like a nursing home at their back yard and they probably did not like us chowing down on their picnic food.

We had problems with the neighbors on a regular basis, as is usual with nursing homes. The worst complaint was the nursing home's incinerator which was belching ash all over the neighbors new swimming pool. We were constantly getting complaints and being monitored but they couldn't do anything against us because we were grandfathered in years ago. Except that we were told not to burn plastic, which the aides did regularly anyway.

In 1978 the heavy block work was done at St. Anne's and now Werner turned his attention to the interior. The first thing he needed was block filler to be placed on all the interior walls of the 3rd floor he had just built. I needed money in order to make a down payment on the house on Base St in New Baltimore, so I asked Werner if I could do the job myself. He said okay, but that I had

to do it quickly so as not to hold up the progress of the other interior workmen. I agreed and came to St. Anne's every night after work till 11 pm and all day Saturday and Sunday. I even worked from 9 am to 2:30 pm on Thanksgiving day in order to get the job done in a timely manner. One funny story about the block filler episode. I came in, said hello to Werner, put my junk clothes on in the bathroom across from his office, then ran upstairs to the 3rd floor to start work. And what heavy work that was! The block filler weighed a ton when you got a roller full of the stuff out of the 5 gallon bucket. I was pulling my 6 foot pole out of the bucket, slopping the block filler on the wall, then filling my roller again, etc. Just as I was pulling the 6 foot pole out of the bucket, then swinging around to slop it on the wall, Joyce, Werner's classy secretary with a \$300 suit on, came up right behind me noiselessly and I came within an inch of slopping the block filler all over that gorgeous suit! She was offering me a cup of tea, classy English style!

Joyce was the best secretary Werner had during the time I knew him. She was from a fine Grosse Pointe family and married a fine, professional man and had stayed at home all her life and raised a family. Her husband was planning on retiring in 5 years and moving to Florida with her. Suddenly Joyce decided that she wanted to prove her worth by going out and getting a secretarial job and proving she could do the work. And prove herself she did. She was most professional and always got the job done expertly and with class. This was the only secretary Werner never hollered at. Joyce said her IQ was not the greatest so whenever she was faced with a new situation she would quietly study it from all angles and silently figure out a solution. Therefore she always appeared to the general public to be quite intelligent.

Werner had a cook, a big, fat jovial woman, over 300 lbs, over 60 years of age who just simply adored Werner, she worshiped the ground he walked on. Irene had a good looking, nice, kind husband, but that cut no ice with Irene, she was in love with Werner, and that was that. She looked at him with cow eyes. The love she had for him shone out of her eyes. She used to get him anything he wanted to eat, and in those days that was a tall order, because Werner's first love was food. They used to bring him trays piled high with assorted foods as soon as he arrived there. No mind that it was in the middle of the day and he had just eaten at Wil Mar. He demanded food as soon as he sat down and would bellow like a stuck pig if he didn't get the stuff pronto. Then at 5 pm he would get one of the first plates of whatever they were serving that evening. Werner and I loved to eat and that was a big problem for both of us. Werner would eat 6 eggs and bread at Wil Mar for breakfast, lunch at Wil Mar, then at 2:30 or 3 pm he would have left overs or early supper at St. Anne's, then at 5:30 pm he would have supper at St. Anne's or he would go over to Beatrice's and eat with her, and then sometimes he would have a 7 pm date with me and would take me to the Kingsley Inn or the Shelby Inn for another dinner. Then he would yell at me that I was making him fat.



Marie Bender



Kurt Wilhelm

Werner never trusted anyone and no one was ever given a key to his home. When Uncle Kurt would come to visit if he did not go for a car ride with Werner he would find himself locked out

of Werner's house till Werner got home. One time when Werner left Uncle Kurt at Wil Mar when Kurt was done working and Werner was still not home Kurt walked the 4 blocks to my mother's house and stayed with her. He tried to get a little romantic and mom sure put him straight in a hurry. Werner did not want to give me a key either, but I had possession of the Blue House since 1981 so it didn't matter as I stayed there till bedtime every day anyway. Werner had lost everything to the communists and he was not about to lose anything more if he could help it.



Werner's Cadillac Eldorado



inside of burned out Eldorado

When I first met Werner he was driving an old, very beat up brown Cadillac Eldorado with about 230,000 miles on it. He was always taking it to the Sunoco station on Auburn between Mound and Ryan for repair. The mechanic there told Werner over and over again that all the money he was putting into this Cadillac for repairs would make a monthly payment on a new Cadillac. Central Auto Parts, Werner's favorite junkyard over on the west side of Detroit on Central Ave told him the same thing. They said they were going to give him a bumper sticker that said "This car totally rebuilt courtesy of Central Auto Parts". Werner hated cars. He said that the American people had a love affair with cars and spent so much of the money they should have been saving for their retirement on cars. The Eldorado burst into flames one evening in Werner's driveway, they think as a result of an electrical short. Werner was very unhappy, and I soon found out it was not due to the car, it was because he had lost his favorite bathing suit in the fire.

Werner went to Vic Tanny's very often. He would go into the wet sauna, then the dry sauna. He would also go into the whirlpool and the swimming pool. He used the saunas to sweat off weight. He felt good when he weighed less at the end of a visit. At first he went to the Vic Tanny's on Rochester Rd just north of 16 mile. They had a pool there. Later he went to the Vic Tanny at 14 and Van Dyke. He would seldom go to the executive Vic Tanny on Telegraph near 15 Mile as they wanted an extra \$5.00 every time you went there.

One time back then I was going home later than Werner from St. Anne's and was coming up Van Dyke when I saw an ambulance go screaming into the Vic Tanny parking lot. I did not have a membership there so I stood outside waiting for the patient to be wheeled out as it was very likely that Werner was in there and his health was always precarious since before I met him. I was always so worried about him being in the sauna for over 1/2 hour at a time as he had a very bad heart. But somehow he always survived.



Sandy with her Datsun B210

Waiting is something I did tremendous amounts of from 1976 to 1980. Werner would set a time for me to be at his house and then I would sit there on Brownell for hours and hours waiting for him to finally come home. I darn near froze to death in my little Datsun many a time waiting for him to come home. When I would finally see his living room lights come on I would go and ring the door bell. One time in 1977 when Werner was having so much trouble with the health dept he refused to answer his apt door or his phone. On Halloween that year I went over to his house, and rang the door bell. No answer. I was standing in the midst of all those overgrown bushes repeatedly ringing the door bell and calling out his name. Just before he finally answered the door a cop stopped me and wondered what I was doing hiding in the bushes. I told him I was ringing the door bell and he accepted that and went away.

Werner almost never picked me up at my house for a date. He said he was far too busy to drive that far out of his way; that his health was not that good and he needed to conserve his energy. I understood and went to him. When I was not with him he used to call me wherever I told him I'd be, do a little small inane talk, then hang up. I later figured out after his death that he was checking up to see if I was where I said I would be. Previous girl friends it seems, ran around on him behind his back. The week he died Werner said to me, "I always knew where you were and whom you were with, you were always honest and truthful almost to the point of stupidity". One time I even heard his diesel engine pull into my driveway on Base St in New Baltimore to see if I was really home.

The Eldorado still ran okay after the fire, but Werner said he would have to get a new car because the ball joints were shot on this front wheel drive car because the car was so terribly heavy and the whole front end was giving out and could no longer be repaired and if he kept driving it one day as he was turning a corner the whole thing would come apart and create an unsteerable situation. But until he sold it, boy did it ever stink after the fire! He had a white seat put in where a brown one had been before, and boy did it ever look awful!



Werner Wilhelm in 1600 acres in Barbeau, with Tiger Paws on this Cadillac

One day after that he went to the car auction on the near west side, and pretending he was a used car dealer, he bid on and got a light blue Cadillac. It was a nice car and served us for many years. It didn't have too many repairs and the worse thing was the gas mileage. At the end at best it got 5 miles per gallon. We used to laugh and say it got 5 gallons to the mile we were in the gas station so often. One funny incident about that car – Werner had Tiger Paws put on the car – all 4 tires. He got a good deal on 4 tires and was quite pleased with the price. Then later we went to the UP and coming back from Pickford heading for M 29 the car rolled sideways continually instead of driving straight ahead. We stopped in a very rural gas station and asked the attendant what was wrong, so he checked the tires and told us- the steel belts had separated and the inner tire was sticking through and the air bulges was causing the tire to roll sideways as it went

forward. Well, we drive the 1000 miles home on those tires without incident and the company prorated and gave new tires in exchange. He really liked the name "Tiger Paws" and often said that name in a cutesy tone of voice.

He often held his own hands out in front of him and referred to them as Bear Paws. He called himself "Bear" because he often thought he was built just like a Bear. He often affectionately called himself "Bearsie".

One time in 1977 my Datsun wouldn't start at St. Anne's. It just wouldn't turn over. So Werner drove me home and the next day picked me up again, and then he said he would tow the car back to Utica to save money. He grabbed a big thick rope out of his trunk, and tied one half to my front bumper and the other half to his rear bumper. Watch the brakes, he said, don't run into me! And off we went! What a wild ride that was! That car never went that fast in all its born days as it did flying down I-94 heading to Utica Rd. Going up the ramp at Utica Rd I suddenly remembered that this was a stick shift and just maybe it might start if I shoved the car into gear and let out the clutch now that we were going at a slower speed. I did so and the car started. I then honked and honked and honked at Werner, trying to get his attention. Finally he asked me what the #@&*\$ was the matter! And I told him the car started and we could disengage the tow rope. So we did and that is the very reason, I still believe, that I am still alive today! If driving in Werner's car was an experience you would never forget, you'd never believe what it was like to be towed by him! Talk about being totally out of control! Those were the days!

Actually, this tow rope was a staple in Werner's life style. That tow rope went everywhere with him. He always kept a big heavy rope in his trunk for emergencies. He made good use of it on many occasions. He towed many a car in his day as he refused to pay tow truck charges.

When I met Werner I was living on 28558 Dino Circle and he didn't like the place because it was a condo. He kept encouraging me to buy a house. Then in July, 1978 I started looking. The real estate lady who sold me the condo told me to wait till after July to sell because then my 3 years would be up. I had bought the condo with 5 % down and also a bonus for being a first time buyer and if you sold before 3 years there was a penalty. The main reason I decided to move is because the neighbors, especially Ed Tacas were real low class troublemakers. So I took Werner's advise and started house hunting. I found a real nice house right on the lake in New Baltimore, but I was a little short on cash for a down payment. I asked Werner for a loan, but he refused to lend me anything, telling me to ask my brother Michael for the money. So I couldn't get that house and instead I found a house at 52324 Base St in New Baltimore that I could afford. So I sold the house on Dino Circle to a cash buyer and moved into New Baltimore with my mom and dad in November, 1978. Werner convinced me to ask my parents to pay 2/3rds of the house payment because there were two of them and one of me. They did so. It was a nice house in a nice location. I had a ½ acre there with a real deep back yard. Werner bought me a garden swing in May, 1979. I took an afternoon off work on a lovely afternoon and put the swing together by myself. I was now even further away from Werner's house in Utica which caused a problem when we wanted to get together. He almost never picked me up. I went to his house as he said the nursing home made him work long hours and made him very tired. But he seldom came home when he said he would so I found myself sitting on the curb on Brownell for often more than an hour at a time waiting for him to show up.

The Datsun started having its first repair problems in 1978. First the clutch went bad and Werner had one of his downtown repair shops put a new clutch in the car. The over tightened it and it wouldn't work right the same night I picked it up so we had to take it back for an adjustment. That night Werner took me out to the Country Inn on Cass Ave in Utica for dinner and he had me park the Datsun right outside the restaurant on Summers St. While we were eating the police came in and told me to move the car that Summers was too narrow to park a car on. Werner put up a fuss but the police said move it or they would tow it. I moved it to the Country Inn parking lot. We took a real cute picture of Werner and me in that parking lot. We both had our cowboy hats on and he was carrying a set of blue prints. Right after that the engine went in the Datsun at 92,000 miles. Werner had the engine repaired and I sold the car for \$1200 right after that. Being the car only cost \$3000 new 3 years ago and got 37 miles per gallon, I made out real good on that deal. That orange car was so small that my mother used to call it my tomato soup can.



Werner Wilhelm in 1600 Acres in Barbeau

Werner bought me that PUCH moped for Easter, a present I dearly loved. I rode that motor bike for hours at a time, going up north onto the dirt back roads discovering areas of farm land I never knew existed. I also used to ride that bike to my softball games which were usually held at the Chesterfield park on the water. Several time Werner would come with Tom Armbruster to watch part of our game. Tom had a real big mouth and loved to try to put down the players. Always the beer talking.

Tom's father, George Armbruster Sr. used to own a nursing home right on a lake in those days. Werner always wanted to buy that nursing home from George, his attorney, but George never wanted to sell. When George retired he put Tom in charge of running the nursing home. One day Tom told Werner that nursing home was no good, that adult foster care was far better and more economical, that you didn't need the nursing staff and therefore you could make more money. Werner was interested in this talk. But again, it was beer talk. Translation: Tom lost the nursing home license due to sloppy management and not heeding the demands of the health dept. Then later Werner heard that Tom also lost the adult foster care license and in due time the nursing home was shut down and the building abandoned. The lawyer then tore down the nursing home and sold the lake front property, which had grown very valuable over the years.

George Armbruster was Werner's attorney for years and years. Werner respected him and looked up to him like a father figure. George gave Werner lots of good advise over the years, but he had one fault that did at times get in the way of his judgement – the attorney, as well as his two sons, were very heavy drinkers, day and night. The older George could hold his liquor but not the sons. My favorite George Armbruster Sr. story was the time Werner went to him for advise about his long time girlfriend, Mary Ann who lived in Birmingham. Werner was seriously considering

marrying her but something was bothering him and holding him back. When he presented the problem to George, he pulled out his legal pad, drew a line down the middle of the page and wrote two headings: FOR and AGAINST. Okay, now tell me some things about this girl, George said to Werner. So Werner started pouring his heart out giving George all this girls attributes. George filled the whole side of the for column, stopped writing and said to Werner, "Okay you gave me a whole page of FORS and no AGAINSTS. What's the bad side. Werner gave him one short and sweet answer, "the mother". George threw his pen up into the air and declared loudly, "It'll never work"!

I never got to meet the old George because he moved to Florida permanently and when Werner and I were down there Werner tried to go to his house but George said he wasn't up to visitors. I did meet Tom a number of times, a lovable big mouthed drunk. After he left Michigan he moved to Florida and became a heating and cooling technician. We met the young George and his wife one time at an oyster bar in Florida. It was a lovely Sunday afternoon when we invited them for dinner. They came already stewed to the gills.

In 1977 Mary Shopinski, Werner's Director of Nursing, invited him to her daughter's wedding so he took me along with him. It was a lovely wedding but I was shocked to see who the daughter was marrying – a brother of an old friend of mine! I had a nice but brief chat with my old friend. She had now been married for about 8 years and appeared happy – Joann Jacobs Hagen was her name and her brother was Eric. At the wedding you should have seen how Irene threw herself at Werner! She was always so in love with him. When he twirled her around the dance floor she was in 7th heaven. She had such a fine, good looking husband but he took second fiddle to Werner.

Werner hurt my feelings real bad with nursing home business twice in 1979 and 1980. In 1979 he was negotiating to buy a nursing home in Clio, Michigan from its long time owner. He then took me there and suggested that I run the place while living up there. I was confused and hurt. Hey, I'm supposed to be your future wife, how can we date and cement any type of relationship while you're in Utica and I'm in Clio. He pressed that idea 3 or 4 times more before giving up. Later I heard from Beatrice that he also tried to get her to move up there all by herself, but she also said no.

The second time he really hurt my feelings and left me shaking to the core when we had broken up briefly for 2 weeks and when he thought it was over, he said, "There goes my 5 year plan". That sure didn't sound very romantic to me! "Aw, I didn't meant it that way" was Werner's response later.

Werner was a very shrewd business man and was always looking for new business opportunities. He expected his girlfriend to jump into the nursing home business with the same enthusiasm as he did. But most women are not built for the rigors of day to day nursing home fiasco. I did it because I loved Werner and wanted to take some of the pressure off him, but it seemed to work out that none of the pressure came off him, but rather the same amount fell onto my shoulders with a corresponding lessening of his pressure. Those were very hard years. No one knows the rigors of running a nursing home unless you lived through it. It took years off Werner's life and gave me cancer and high blood pressure.



Werner Wilhelm II, der Weihnachtsman!

Werner gave very extravagant Christmas parties at St. Anne's. He even dressed up as Santa Claus. He put a lot of thought, effort and preparation into those parties. He would haul his stereo system from Wil Mar down to St. Anne's as well as tons of folding chairs. He was the master of ceremonies at those parties. He would wander throughout the nursing home greeting and interacting with the staff, families and patients. The Christmas spirit with the staff members he liked would get a little wild as the booze continued to flow. We have pictures of staff members sitting on his lap and even one of Werner playing with the light up Santa Claus on Irene's breast. When I enlarged that picture I had to get just a head and shoulders of Werner so you couldn't see his paw on Irene's anatomy. Werner's old girlfriend Judy Oust used to come to the Christmas party with her father, a tall, stately elegant looking gentleman. He used to go up on the third floor and play the piano for the residents and their guests. He was a very fine piano player and Werner used to love to hear him play.



Werner, Judy Oust & her father, Mr. Oust

Judy used to work for an advertising agency, Young & Rubicon in downtown Detroit and when Werner put his brochure for St. Anne's together Judy gave him a major amount of input. She was the artistic type- a very sensitive person. She also was very fond of Werner all through the years. She met Werner through Beatrice when Beatrice worked at the same firm.

Judy was a poet and Werner was proud of her accomplishments in that regard. Judy had one of her poems published and she gave Werner a copy of the anthology of poems that her poem appeared in. Here is Judy's published poem:

THE TINY PINK BOUQUET

Every Easter morning you gave me a tiny pink bouquet
It told me what I meant to you but never had to say

You never showered me with attention & heavy empty words
You did not have to shout your love in order to be heard

You did not build a palace for all the world to see
You planted a garden in my heart with a bouquet just meant
For me

There is no castle standing nor is yet to be built
That has endured like your bouquet which spoke to me and wilt

& so it must, into our lives came the laughter with the tears
A tiny pink bouquet recorded them through all the passing years

That tiny pink bouquet that you gave to me
Contained everything my heart needed to see

Through that tiny pink bouquet still with you I remain
As we renew our life together over and over again.

- JUDY OUST

You may think it strange that Werner had a great interest in poetry, but actually he came from a very artistic family and was quite artistic himself. As a 10 year old boy he did poetry readings with his teacher and was very good at it. He and the teacher traveled all over Germany doing interpretive poetry readings. He gave me a sample of one such reading and I was very impressed. Werner put a lot of feeling and emotion into his poetry recitations and he truly made the poetry come alive for the listener. When he recited a poem you discovered a lot of feeling and meaning in that poem that you did not see before. He had a real gift in that regard. Another time he sat down and drew a south seas painting and it was very good. His grandfather and great-grandfather Wilhelm were artists par excellence. They chiseled very fine headstones for a living and also did some very fine drawings, some of which Astrid has on her practice wall. But Werner never pursued his artistic abilities because he said that artistic endeavors were a breadless art.

One thing Werner absolutely could not do was to carry a tune. He had no musical ability whatsoever. He butchered a song. He wasn't even close to the right key. As a child he took accordion lessons but his teacher soon threw his hands up and told his mother it was hopeless. Werner later said to me that he really wanted to play an accordion, but looking back he realized that he should have started with piano, maybe he might have got somewhere playing something simpler and then moved on to the accordion later if he was able to master piano playing.

One day Werner and I got a very sad call from Judy. Her father had passed away after a lingering illness and she requested that Werner and I attend the funeral. Werner & I went to both days of Judy's father's funeral. Judy needed his support. She was on the verge of collapse from grief and had to be half carried out of the funeral parlor by relatives at the end of the first evening. She loved her father very much and couldn't bear to lose him.

My first Valentine's day with Werner bears retelling. He worked late at St. Anne's, I was with him when he drove home that evening. He was in a devil of a hurry to get to the Hallmark store before it closed at 9 pm. He came out carrying a Valentine's card and he also had a box of chocolates in hand. Aw, how sweet, I said to myself. How romantic. He then pulled into Wil

Mar's driveway, charged out of the car leaving me sitting there while he ran into Wil Mar and gave the box of chocolates & the Valentine's day card to his aides, coming out of the nursing home empty handed. When I told him I felt a little bad about what he had just done, he told me he didn't know what I was talking about.

I never remember getting any candy from him, but I did get flowers on occasion, but when it came to flowers he was a real Indian giver! Either I got second hand flowers from the nursing home, and even then I often didn't get to keep them. The crowning glory of his insensitivity came when he gave me a very handsome flower arrangement given to the nursing home by a vendor. I really liked that arrangement and I took it to his home and loved looking at it. Then come Christmas time it was gone. I asked where it went. He took it out of the house and gave it to Beatrice! Was I ever mad about that! Aw, don't be like that! Was his reply. I threatened to tell Beatrice I wanted it back, but he told me not to dare to do that. I did get one bouquet of flowers that was purchased just for me and I even got to keep it. It was a little arrangement with a Bear in it when I had my cancer surgery. He carried it to the hospital and then later back home. When Edna saw the flowers in his car she freaked because she then figured out that I was in a hospital.

I worked for the Department of Social Services when Werner met me. I was a social worker for Children and Family Services in Macomb County. I liked my job for the most part. I made home calls two or three times per week and met a lot of interesting low income families. Werner hated social workers. He said they were a bunch of communists. When he met me and I told him I was a social worker he almost refused to meet me and certainly had no great expectations that he would date me more than once. He dated me and two other women that month and made no hesitation telling me that I was on the bottom of his list of women to meet and that he dated me last. But I found notes in his bedroom after he died. One of the notes had our three names on it and his evaluation of me after our first date was the only positive one. One of the other women he dated that month collected rents and kept the books for a large rental company in Detroit. Werner told her that that is what one of his girlfriends did in Detroit 10 years ago. Her dad, Ralph Lipshaw, was a real estate owner in Detroit and also sold real estate. He had put his only daughter through college at Wayne State. She had a Master's degree when she went to work for her dad. He sent her out to make some difficult rent collections on a Saturday afternoon because the standard rent collection avenues had failed. She never came back. He got a knock on the door from the Detroit police. They were sorry to inform him that his beloved daughter had been murdered by a recalcitrant tenant. What a waste of a promising young life!

Werner used collection companies to collect and keep track of his rentals, but he said that was a total disaster. Their book keeping was in shambles and in the end no one had a clue as to who paid and who didn't. It cost Werner a lot of money in the end.

The second woman on his list had a number of phone conversations with Werner but in the end they never were able to set a date to meet and after many tries, Werner gave up, figuring she was not really interested in meeting him. She had an advanced degree and sounded like a cold fish to Werner.

Werner met my parents and my brother Michael in December, 1976. He invited them over to his apartment and served them coffee and cake on his very fine Rosenthal china. It was a pleasant afternoon.



Marie Bender

Werner and my mom got along like a cat and a dog. They were always sniping at one another. With my brothers it was a polite distance. My dad was polite but he didn't like the way Werner treated me, especially his repeated refusal to marry me. On a long walk down Base street when I was recovering from the thyroid disorder dad told me that he hoped I would meet someone who really loved me some day.

Werner had a long track record of not liking the parents of his girlfriends. Beatrice said Werner was shouting at her dad and calling him names when he lay dying of cancer. Werner did get along very well with Beatrice's mama however. When she came here for the first time when she got off the plane in New York there was Werner waiting to greet her. Mama said she thought she saw the face of God as she looked at Werner. Rudi was furious because Werner made him look like he had egg on his face for not being there for her.



Bill Bender



Craig Stephens

Werner took my brother Bill and my nephew Craig out to a very fine restaurant, the Shelby Inn and ordered a huge, delicious prime rib dinner for all of us. He then took us to a drive inn movie in Mt. Clemens. It was a double feature. Craig complained all the way to the movie that he was so stuffed he thought he was gonna bust! We all said we felt the same way. Well, after we watched the first movie the intermission came on the screen. The first thing they did was dance hot dogs, pop and pop corn across the screen. Bill said to me, who was sitting in the front seat, "Let me out". Why? I said. No reply. Then Craig piped up, "Oh, no, you're not going to buy more food, are you?" Ah, shut up and let me out, was Bill's reply. We let him out and he came back with two hands full of goodies. The rest of us thought we were going to be sick just watching him eat all that stuff.

A real funny story about Werner and Craig. Werner liked Craig. He told Craig they should race on foot from my house on Base St to the Mc Donald's on the corner of M-29 and they should buy a whole sack full of hamburgers, which Werner used to do at the Mott hamburger stand at Fort and Livernois when he was in his early 40s. Craig got sick thinking of eating all those hamburgers. Then on Craig's last day in Michigan Werner took him and I to the revolving

restaurant on the top of the Holiday Inn on Telegraph near 12 Mile Rd. We had a lovely dinner, very leisurely. Too leisurely in fact for Craig was getting very antsy fearing he'd miss his plane. We'll get you there all right Werner assured us both. I too was starting to get worried. Werner drove like a bat out of hell, as usual, once we left the restaurant. When we got to the airport we had about 10 minutes to departure time. Werner told Craig they would have to run the whole way with his suitcases in hand as there was no time to check the luggage. They ran down the airport corridor and soon came to the check point. Werner threw the luggage on the x ray belt and Craig threw his carry on bag on. All of a sudden all the bells and whistles went off and all the security guards came a running. They ripped open Craig's luggage and found inside the carry on bag a perfect toy imitation of a machine gun. It was his water rifle. Boy, were they angry! Boy did they scream at Werner and Craig. Boy, did Werner ever get disgusted with Craig for putting them through that. Werner screamed keep the damned gun, this kid's plane is taking off in 5 minutes or less. He and Craig grabbed the luggage minus the machine gun and off they went, tails a flying. They got to the plane just as they were closing the doors. Werner and Craig ran onto the plane and the stewardess then shut the door and they were ready to taxi out for take off. At this point Werner realized he could get a free pane ride to California. He made a quick assessment in his mind of what he had on his agenda for the next couple of days and realized that some things just had to be taken care of now, so he alerted the stewardess that he needed to get off, so she opened the door and let him off the plane. I had been sitting curbside all the while in his Cadillac, waiting for him to return. Can you imagine how worried I would have been had I waited there for over 4 hours and he never returned? Those were the days before cell phones.

Werner was always real good to my brother Bill. Bill would often call Werner up and talk to him at great length. Bill liked Werner very much and vice versa. When I was in the hospital with low thyroid in 1980 it was Bill and no one else in my family who called Werner on a regular basis and kept him apprised of my medical condition

Werner respected my father but being my father became really silent in his last years, there was not too much exchange of ideas between the two. Werner's only negative comment about my father is that he should have invested all his surplus cash in the stock market. But I tried to explain to Werner that not too many middle class people who lived through the depression trusted the stock market enough to invest their retirement savings in it. Werner replied that he lost \$25,000 in the stock market in the recession of 58-60 but that he recouped his losses at a later date.

In February of 1982 my mom was in California visiting my sister and dad was alone in the house, so Werner invited him and Uncle Kurt to go to Van Pamel's on the Lake right across from his house in Fair Haven for Sunday dinner. So we all went there and had a very fine dinner. Dad had fish as he was watching his fats and cholesterol on the advise of his internist, Dr. Cholak. It was at this dinner that I noticed that my father's lips turned a dark blue as he was eating. It was with a heavy heart that I realized that his time was drawing near. Werner was always the most gracious host when he took us to dinner. We always went to the finest restaurants and had the best meals they served. Werner never stinted on food. He said many a time that when you were with him you experienced German hospitality – all you could eat and drink. Werner, however, greatly frowned on alcoholic beverages for himself and others. He did not want to sit and watch someone get drunk and pay the resulting bar tab. Werner said over and over again that he was so

proud of me when I was with him in a group setting for dinner and when asked what I would like to drink I always turned down alcoholic beverages. Werner hated drunkenness. He very seldom drank himself. I can't remember more than 3 times Werner got drunk. Once was when he played Santa Claus for Mali's 3 kids, going over to Carlene's house in Southfield on Christmas Eve and distributing presents. It was no wonder he got drunk that night for he always said he hated other people's kids, and he certainly had absolutely no interest in being Santa Claus. That was totally against his grain. So he drank a whole bottle of Kailua and then hopped into his Cadillac and started driving over 40 miles per hour in a driving snow that was sticking on the ground. When he got to the intersection where he had to turn left he took the corner in the snow doing almost 40 mph. Telephone pole, here we come, was my thought, but the Cadillac was heavy and low slung and made the curve in good order. As Werner made this corner, he said "Whee! This car drives just like Santa Claus' sled!" But we got to Carlene's in one piece and he distributed the gifts as Uncle Kurt got on his knees and begged Santa for a present. Santa told him he was bad and would get nothing this year.

The other two times I saw Werner get drunk was at St. Anne's Christmas parties. They were a tremendous strain on him and so to lighten the stress he drank like a fish. One time he had the maintenance man pile up all the folding chairs into the back of a rented trailer and he drove them back home to Utica. He was too drunk to realize that he had a trailer on the back of the car and he was also weaving into two lanes and onto the shoulder of the freeway and when he would hit the shoulder curb the trailer with the chairs would bounce all over the place. Boy, was I scared! When we finally pulled into Werner's driveway in Utica I was so relieved. Prematurely so, it turned out. He pulled the car in the garage and then hit the garage door button to let the overhead door down and the door smashed into the trunk lid and bent the thing all out of shape. The next day he made Charlie bend it back as best he could. So forever more afterwards Werner had a very funny looking trunk lid.



Willy Fichter

Much later Werner took his cousin Willy Fichter to Florida to the Registry hotel. Werner paid the room bill in full, but on check out when the hotel presented Werner with a plethora of phone and booze charges, Werner went out to the car and gruffly told Willy to get back in there and settle up his own phone and booze charges, which he did.



stringing barbed wire on 1600 acres

Uncle Kurt liked to get snookered at parties and once Kurt was so drunk that at home he was rolling on Werner's living room floor and acting real silly. Werner got furious and told Kurt to go to bed and sober up. Another time Rudi drank under the table with Kurt and we had a hard time putting Kurt in the car. His legs kept buckling under him as he tried to slide into the car. Werner finally pushed him in and shut the door and drove him home. One really funny time Kurt got drunk was with a neighbor in Barbeau catty corner from Werner's 1600 acres. Kurt spoke only German and this guy Mc Cleary spoke only English but they had a ball talking back and forth and the drunker they got the more they understood each other. This drinking bout Werner condoned as it was beneficial in a business promotion sort of way. Otherwise Kurt was ever stone sober.

The real fun times, as well as the most exasperating, the most frightening and the most exhausting was working with him in the nursing homes. Talk about a circus! If there wasn't a circus going on, he would create one. There was never a dull moment with Werner around!

I started working for Werner as an Administrator in November of 1981. That was when he put me on the payroll but I did not start working there until January 11, 1982. Isn't it a strange coincidence that I started working for Werner on January 11th, 1982 and he later died on January 11th, 1993, 11 years later? Werner cajoled me into working for him. He kept telling me to quit my job with the State of Michigan and come to work for him at St. Anne's. He said it would be like I was hardly working. Ya, sure. I never worked so hard or so many hours in my lifetime as I did at St. Anne's. Werner offered me a good salary package, however. I did make more than I did at my job at the State and I had a good blue cross health insurance, same as I did at the State. I was scared to leave the state job as that is a secure source of employment, which the nursing home might not be. I changed for 2 reasons, mainly because Werner was offering it to me and secondly because after 12 years with the State I felt the walls were coming in on me. At the nursing home I would start about 9 am, work as an Administrator until 5:30 pm, then change into work clothes and start plastering and painting the damage done by Lee Seymour when he poked holes everywhere running the plumbing stacks through to the 3rd floor and then onto the roof. I tried to get Werner to hire someone to do this but he refused, so I did it myself. We had a health dept complaint about the holes in the bathroom wall and ceiling by a disgruntled family member, and another family member called me and warned me what was about to take place. Here's a funny story about my evenings plastering the second floor at St. Anne's. Werner would go home about 6 to 7 pm and I would plaster from about 5:30 pm to 11 pm. By 10:30 pm I was exhausted and knew I had a long drive home to Utica so I was longing to finish up and head for my much longed for bed. It was about 10:45 pm that night and I still had one wall to paint after I finished my plaster job and I did not want to go back to this room the next night. I always wanted to start fresh in a new bathroom as I had all the bathrooms on the second floor to finish. When I started this job there was a woman in the first bed by the door that was curled up completely in the fetal position and when they raised her bed and put her on her back to feed her pureed food her head and her legs were up off the bed as she was still shaped like the letter C. She was totally non-alert and had no idea there was food in front of her, so when the aide had the pureed food on the spoon in front of this lady's mouth she would shout, the lady would open her mouth in astonishment and the aide would put the liquefied food in her mouth and the lady would swallow, etc. until the bowl was empty. That lady was really out of it, seldom verbalized, and when she did it was soft and was total nonsense. Well, I was finishing painting her bathroom, it was 10:45 pm and I was exhausted. I was on a ladder in a real awkward position trying to get around a bowl, a light

fixture, etc. when suddenly the paint pan slipped, fell to the floor and spewed paint all over the bathroom floor! Aw @\$%!! Was my reply to this revolting development. Suddenly out of this lady in the fetal position came a retort given in a most dignified English accent, “Young lady, that is no way for a lady to talk!”

Werner had a large office in the basement at St. Anne’s. It was his little Kingdom and he was without a doubt the King. He had a beautiful wooden desk. It had elaborate scroll work and was very solid and very expensive. It was such a shame when they had that huge flood at St. Anne’s and the desk was over a foot deep in water. That desk suffered irreversible water damage and lost a great deal of its majestic beauty. (This is the same flood in which Maxine Parrish cut up his office rug and threw it out the back window, much to his anger.)

The office walls were painted a medium gold-yellow, his favorite color. Much of St. Anne’s and Wil Mar’s walls were also painted yellow, per his choice. Mrs. Hefferon was very vocal about her distaste at seeing so much yellow in the nursing home, which obviously wasn’t her favorite color. He always had a picture of Jesus over his left shoulder on the back wall. He also had numerous filing cabinets, ugly dark gray but very substantial ones, all over his south wall. He also had dark Grey metal shelves in which he stored a multitude of various items he felt he needed for the repair of the nursing home. Glenn, the maintenance man, had a storage room right across from Werner’s office, and was it ever stuffed full to the rafters of various sundry junk items that Werner felt they could use at some future date. Much of it was used later, but on the other hand there was so much there that you wouldn’t know you had many of the times as they were buried.

Werner had a kitchen table, a large one, in his office which he called his conference table. Most of the meetings that took place there was with the health dept. And boy, were they ever a circus! When the health dept would sit there and tell Werner the violations that they found Werner would get on the intercom and call the offending employee down, have them stand in front of all of them seated at that table, and scream at the employee and dress them down real good right in front of the health dept. The health dept would get very upset, saying that Werner should address this with the employee later in private. The health dept were just like the communists, they liked to do everything sneaky and in private and did not want others to know that they had instigated the complaint.

Another use for the conference table was to entertain guests, especially at his Christmas parties. The most memorable in my mind was when his old steady girlfriend, Barbara Waldo, came to his party with her fiancé. Barbara, her fiancée and Werner sat at that table for over an hour and it was so obvious that Barbara was looking from her fiancé to Werner, sizing them both up and comparing them. Barbara was still in love with Werner. Her father was the Manager of a NBD branch and Werner was impressed with his credentials. The father had died and Barbara was living with her widowed mother on the pension the father had provided for them.

Werner’s office had one window, facing the alley. It was high on the wall and it gave light, but you couldn’t see much out of it. There was a retaining wall keeping the dirt from the walkway in back, as the walkway was bout 4 feet below the alley level. This retaining wall leaned a little more inwards with every passing year and in our last days at St. Anne’s the health dept wanted it straightened as it was threatening to fall over.

His office never flooded after that one terrible flood when the pipes broke. But the hallway flooded with every heavy rain and the chapel and the DON office also flooded. Werner had his own bathroom built right across from his office, which was a very good idea as he used it very often due to his enlarged prostate and the copious amount of juice that he drank in the course of a day. The staff was always running huge beakers of juice back and forth to him from the kitchen. His favorite was greatly diluted orange juice and coffee.

Werner's secretary also had her desk in his office by the entrance. He had secretaries of every level of personality and competence. His most competent without a doubt was Joyce Cox. She was born and raised in Grosse Pointe and had the polish to show for it. She dressed in \$250 suits and was very elegant and classy. Her IQ was not of the highest, but she knew it so she kept her mouth shut and figured out a problem with deductive reasoning. She always made a competent decision. Werner never hollered at this one. Werner's favorite was probably Maxine Parrish who was with him when he first took over St. Anne's. He and she had a camaraderie. He spoke often of her, and even when she made him so mad he could boil, he later retold those episodes with mirth. When Joyce left she picked her replacement, and what a difference in secretaries! The new one was low class, a welfare type, dressed in high tight skirts and pants and certainly had no self starting ability. When Werner was there they knocked out the work lickety split. But as soon as he was out the door it was play time. Nothing got done until he told them he was on his way down there. When he had a lot of work they needed to get out and he was too busy at Wil Mar he would call them first thing in the morning and tell them he was on his way, so get started on the latest project he had to get out. Then an hour and a half later he told them he got delayed, but was leaving now and how was the work coming along. Then every hour and a half all day long he would call them and repeat that he was coming, so by the end of the day he was never there but the work got done in his absence.

Another game he played with both nursing homes is he would tell the employees at each nursing home how much better her counterpart at the other nursing home was and how much better and faster she would put the work out. He did this with Bonnie, his most competent bookkeeper at St. Anne's, telling her how good Margaret was and how fast she did the monthly billing. Boy, when Margaret showed up at St. Anne's with Werner as they had just been down to Larry Brown, the CPA's office to try to figure out where the missing \$100,000 was, boy did she ever razz Werner about comparing Bonnie to Margaret. Margaret was a cat on a hot tin roof that day as she sat in St. Anne's lobby waiting for Werner to drive her back home to Utica. One look at her actions and one knew she was guilty of something. She was beat red and I'm sure her blood pressure was through the roof. She quit right after that, sold her house, moved out of state with no forwarding address. Years later, after Werner's death I was walking through the Utica cemetery one fine summer evening and I saw her husband's grave marker. I then knew that she had moved back into the area and that her husband had passed away on his polycythemia blood disorder.

The "crowning glory" of his secretaries at St. Anne's was Marilyn. Marilyn was over 350 lbs and crushed the secretaries chair in short order. She sure knew how to push Werner's buttons. He was always screaming at her with his full volume. She would lower her head to one side and say, "aw gee, Mr. Wilhelm". When things got real loud and out of control Marilyn would remind

Werner that her uncles owned Randazzo's market and were in the Mafia. One day the phone rang, Marilyn answered it, then said, "Mr. Wilhelm, line one is for you". Werner picked up the line and Marilyn's Mafia Uncle was on the line. The Uncle said to Werner, "You will be good to my little niece, won't you Mr. Wilhelm." Werner replied, "yes, sir". A Mafia uncle even stopped by Werner's office one day to make his acquaintance. Werner's relationship with Marilyn's uncles wasn't all bad, however. They used to give him fabulous produce from their market at a reasonable price and on occasion when Werner needed information, their connections would be able to provide it for him. One time he was wondering what Dunn & Bradstreet had to say about him, so he asked Marilyn to find out. She did and told Werner the results of her inquiry. They had very little information on him, but a note in the file said not to contact Wilhelm as he was very violent. Werner just laughed at that.

One day in particular things got really hot between Marilyn and Werner and she was whining beyond endurance so Werner had more than he could stand that day and he picked up the fat Detroit telephone book and heaved it across the room at Marilyn. She saw that phone book come whizzing toward her head, ducked and it flew past her and hit the wall behind her and fell to the floor. "Ha!, you missed!" Marilyn said with much glee in her voice. Marilyn was with Werner until he sold the nursing home in July, 1984 to Hari. Marilyn was 100% loyal to Werner after the sale, which drove Hari nuts as Marilyn was spilling all of Hari's news to Werner. Hari fired her about a year later to stop all the leak of information to Werner. Marilyn later started her own day care center and called Werner often to report on her progress with her new business which she said was running well and she was thinking of expanding it.

Marilyn was there when I started working at St. Anne's and believe me, she soon raised my blood pressure at least 30 points. I couldn't stand that whining voice of hers. And it wasn't until several months after I started working there that I figured out that she was following me around and tattling to Werner everything I was trying to get done. One day I had been reading the health dept correction list and was trying to correct the violations when Marilyn came upstairs, saw what I was in the process of doing, turned around to go back downstairs while saying in her whiniest, sing song tattle tale tone of voice, "I'm telling!". I walked after her in a rage, pulled back my hand and was about to swat her a good one when I caught myself just in time. She sure could get me going, that's for sure.

The potentially hottest secretary we had at St. Anne's came shortly after Marilyn. Werner asked a fellow Administrator, Paul Kosnik, if he knew of a good secretary for St. Anne's. Paul, who never was our friend, hesitated and then said his live in girlfriend, Gail Hill. (Paul had a disastrous background. He was a Catholic priest for a number of years, then he fell in love with a nun, they left their religious orders and married, had 4 children then he left his wife for Gail. Werner said his wife was a lovely person and was devastated when Paul left her. Paul lived with Gail and they led a wild life together. Paul lived with Gail and her children in a home in Centerline. One day Paul left his Administrator's job around 7 pm at the nursing home he was running at Conner and Warren, and went to his house in Centerline. He ate dinner there and then took his step daughter's friend home to Detroit in a real bad neighborhood. She told him to drop her off in the alley. Paul was supposed to have sex with this underage girl at this house. When he stopped there the girl and her friends stabbed Paul repeatedly in the chest. Paul managed to drive a little ways and then died behind the wheel. The girl got in the car and sat on top of Paul and in this

position drove Paul's dead body out of the alley. Many people supposed that Gail had a hand in this but nothing was proved. Paul had a \$200,000 life insurance policy that Gail turned in for payment as she was the beneficiary. Sometimes the will of God wins out in strange ways. Payment on the policy was denied as this was not the 120th day it was in force – the first day of coverage was the next day, about 1 ½ hours after he was killed.)

Anyway Werner took Paul's suggestion and hired Gail. What a fiasco that was! The first day she came in about 20 minutes late and we started working on figuring time cards together. I sat next to her and was shocked to discover there was liquor on her breath at 9:30 in the morning. Then at lunch time she took the lid off her dinner and exclaimed, "oh, all those calories". She then ate only a small portion of a full course dinner all management was entitled to. Then Werner and I had to go out of town for a few days and when we came back we found Gail was incinerating all of our current records that we are required to keep for 5 to 7 years! We salvaged what was sitting in front of the incinerator not yet burned and then sent Gail on her way. On her way out the door she takes all the records with her! I was new then and thought it was a bigger disaster than it was. I didn't realize, as Werner later explained to me, that all the records could be reproduced using the cancelled checks.

The next secretary lasted only about 1 week. She was a loud mouthed, unorganized 50 year old woman named Florence. What got Werner most steamed up is that she bought a household cardboard file folder and thought she was going to run the nursing home bills out of that. She and Werner were always getting into it. All that hollering and screaming by both of them gave me a headache. But Werner had Florence arrange to meet Gail in a supermarket parking lot and retrieve all the records. This occurred after Werner threatened to have Gail arrested if she didn't return the records to him pronto. After retrieving the records and hollering at Werner the whole week Florence decided to quit, thanks be to the Lord! One week later Florence comes back with the thought of resuming her secretarial position. No, I could never work with him even though I really like him she decides.

At St. Anne's Werner split the bookkeeping into two separate areas, payables, which the secretary did, and receivables which Bonnie Lerner did. Bonnie was a most competent bookkeeper and she collected every penny which Werner had coming to him, and possibly more on the side. Bonnie worked for Werner almost all of his years at St. Anne's. Having worked there about 12 years when Werner sold it to Mali. Bonnie continued to work for Mali, earning an even better salary until she died on the job of a fatal aneurysm one Monday evening after playing bingo. Had she went to Henry Ford instead of Mt. Clemens General, she might have been alive today as she was a very vigorous woman in the best of health. She bled to death in the 5 hours they kept her in their emergency room deciding what to do for her.

Bonnie quickly lost her loyalty to Werner the moment he sold that place. She immediately transferred it to Hari Mali who previously she had no liking for. But she cost us money in the end for she refused to bill for Medicare for Werner and she also did not turn over to us the necessary paperwork for me to rebill Medicare so money for the last several months of Medicare was lost and then later it also came back to haunt us once again when Blue Cross wanted money back because we didn't have a prescribed number of patients on the program. Werner ignored them, hired a lawyer and eventually they went away about the time of his death.

But the State Medicaid program and its head Dennis Madelinski did not go away so easily. He sued Werner and Werner went to Feldman and Feldman told Werner to put money into escrow until he saw which way the lawsuit would turn out. Feldman told Werner there were only certain types of securities that were legal to put the money into while awaiting the outcome of the suit. But Werner, true to form, went to his stock broker and looked over every type of bond that was available in 1984 and found that the non approved bonds were paying far, far more than the approved ones, so guess which ones Werner bought? Yup, the lucrative ones, naturally. And guess what, true to form also, he got away with it and made a small fortune on them and then in the end paid the State quite a bit less than he had accumulated through his investments. No surprise, huh? Werner had me go through all the medicaid books and tell him if we really owed that money or not. I went through with a fine tooth comb and found we not only owed every bit of what they said we did, but probably some more too which they missed. St. Anne's medicaid was a bonanza for Werner. He was on the MIP program there which meant they figured out what they thought they would owe you and then gave you that check every 2 weeks and then every quarter they would reconcile and either give you what they still owed you or if you were overpaid, take back the overpayment. Well one fine day in 1983 under the MIP program a check for \$113,000 came through the mail and Bonnie informed Werner he was not entitled to one red cent of that check, it was a booboo on the part of the State. Werner showed the bonus check to Mali, they both had a good horse laugh, then Werner invested it and the State did not discover the overpayment until Werner sold and they were out their money until the outcome of the lawsuit was about to be revealed and Werner made a settlement with them.

When Werner was selling St. Anne's and Wil Mar he was supposed to inform the State in writing 2 months before hand. Well Werner was no fool. He knew that the State wanted to know so they could cut off your last 2 medicaid checks and keep the money for months and months, possibly years until the final settlement was agreed upon. But Werner got the upper hand by informing the State after the deal was consummated. He sold both homes the end of July but effective July 1st, thus collecting his last 2 medicaid checks. Werner was an extremely astute businessman who calculated every angle before proceeding. Werner said life is like a chess game. When you are about to do something important you must look at life's playing board from all angles and then plan at least 3 steps ahead. That's what Werner always did. And when he would almost do a deal and then back away at the last minute due to cold feet, he would always follow the progress of the almost purchased venture to see how it did. Werner said in all earnestness that all projects he almost bought did in fact do quite well. It was a reaffirmation of his trust in his own sound judgement.

But he handled his personal relationships in the same manner and that did not work out that well because women were not willing to remain on the hook year after year after year with no commitment on his part because Werner wanted to study the evolution of the relationship. I was the only one who did not move on after years of waiting in vain for Werner to commit.

Werner always had problems with credit cards. He had a very good relationship with City National Bank and had a loan through them. So he asked the manager of the branch at Mack and Cadieux for a credit card and was issued one. Boy, I'm sure that manager was sorry he did that, for every month the manager had to stop by Werner's office and ask for the overdue payment.

Werner would get the statement and put it to one side till he could compare it with his credit card slips. Well, it seems every month he'd lose some of the slips and never found the time to reconcile what slips he did have so the bill never got paid. The manager wisely did not renew the credit card when it expired. Werner later decided to get a credit card again so he filled a new application and sent it in. Werner was very private and never let anyone know his finances, a trait learned in Nazi and communist Germany in order to protect your assets in crisis times. So he sent in the application half blank. Several weeks later he got a reply from the company – a denial. Werner copied the denial notice and posted it on the bulletin board next to the time clock, saying, “see, girls, you’re not the only one who has problems with the credit dogs.” (Werner’s denial notice said he was denied because he had no verifiable source of income!)

Bonnie Lerner’s daughter Cindy worked for us in the kitchen, first as a dietary aide, then as a dietary supervisor. She took the CDM course, which Emma Williams helped her with. She took over 1 year to complete it and the health dept was getting tired of having a supervisor in the kitchen without a completed certified Dietary Manager’s course, so Werner put pressure on Cindy and Emma and the course was then completed in short order.

Cindy had a very happy, upbeat personality and was fun to be around. She had a lot of energy and could enthusiastically work through a big project and bring it to completion. If she was treated nice you could talk her into doing projects that were way outside her job description. As mentioned, she sprayed and killed 10,000 cockroaches with me, staying on that job from 8 am to 4 pm. We also worked together and painted the entire hallway in the basement from one end to the other in record time. It looked so nice when we were done with it. Cindy and I just laughed at that point and said we wished we had artistic ability so we could paint a race car coming at us at the far end of the hall and then paint stores all along the side walls. We had many a laugh finishing off that project.

Another time we had a couple of days of big snow storms at St. Anne’s and Cindy decided to organize a sleep over with her staff. Most of the kids were affected by her enthusiasm and stayed all night for her pajama party. Believe you me, that was one bleary eyed kitchen crew the next day!

One day Cindy decided she wanted a bunch of stuff hung up on the wall and she called Glen, the maintenance man to help her. They were block walls so getting nails through them took some effort. But Glen was an older, peaceful, very quiet kind man so he went quietly with Cindy and put a bunch nails up where ever she wanted them. Cindy smiled at Glen and told him that today she felt just like she was married to him because that’s what husband’s do for their wives, put up nails all over. Another time Glen didn’t show up for work and Cindy organized a crew to go over to his house and see if he was okay because he was over 60 and had no one to look out for him and they were afraid that something happened to him. They called his house, there was no answer. We were worried about him as he had never missed a day of work and now he was no call no show, which was highly unusual for him. They went to his house and looked in a lot of windows but saw nothing. The next day he showed up, and when asked said he had had a court date for a traffic citation. A lot of us worried for nothing.

Another time a cat came around outside the kitchen window. Cindy let the cat in and started feeding it and giving it milk. At night she would let it out the back window as it wanted to prowls during the night.

One night it didn't want to go out and when she came to work in the morning her cat had a surprise for her – 4 orange and white kittens! Quite an accomplishment for a tom cat! These kittens had far too many digits on each paw. Their paws looked funny. Well, Cindy was in her glory with these new kittens. She said they made her a grandma! She fixed up a nice warm place for them to stay and she fed mama cat as much as she could eat. At first she hid the litter from Werner afraid he would evict them. She had also hidden Mama cat when she first got her for the same reason. What she didn't know was that Werner was an animal lover and although he had no love for cats they were welcome in his nursing home. When the baby cats were able to ambulate Cindy let them have the run of the basement. It was adorable watching all these little guys scamper about, all playing with one another at top speed.

Alice Mocerri was a very dedicated physical therapy aide who had her physical therapy room in the basement at St. Anne's. She often had a hard time getting her patients to go through the range of motion exercises as most of these old people just wanted to be left alone. Well Cindy and Alice cooked up a good idea between them. They decided to let the kittens scamper about the physical therapy room as long as the patients were there. Suddenly from not wanting physical therapy everyone couldn't wait to go there and watch the kittens at play while they did their exercises. What was previously a dreaded hour became one of great anticipation. The cat therapy I am sure, did more for these patient's state of health than the physical therapy ever could.

While the kittens were running all around the chapel downstairs Werner got a call from his aides at St. Anne's. They said a guy named Paul Benson was there looking to spend the night with him. OH @\$% was Werner's reply. I don't want that guy under my roof! I tell you what. There are spare beds in the chapel. Make one up, then make him a couple of sandwiches and put him to bed there and tell him I'll see him in the morning! Paul owned a 320 acre farm in oil well country, which he was losing as he couldn't make payments or the taxes. He wanted to sell Werner that property and make a profit on it. Werner thought he wanted too much and would not buy it. We had already been down there twice and walked the property and now this was Paul's last ditch effort to unload the property. Werner didn't want it at that price. Paul had a very pleasant, upbeat personality despite his financial woes. I really liked the 74 year old fellow.

Mali was Werner's physical therapy company. Originally Mali was in partnership with another physical therapist. After a few years they got into a feud and Werner found himself in the middle of the fight. The partner ended up suing Mali and Werner was about to drop the company to stay out of a very messy situation. Mali very badly wanted to keep the St. Anne's account so he gave Werner a written agreement that Werner would in no way be liable for anything that happened in the dispute. With this written assurance Werner retained Mali. Mali made good money from the physical therapy but he also had another reason for wanting to stay at St. Anne's. Mali knew that Werner was a very successful multi facility owner-operator and also a self made millionaire so he wanted to study Werner to learn his ways. Mali spent hours and hours in Werner's St. Anne office just sitting there and picking his brain. He also kept trying to jockey into position to eventually buy St. Anne's from Werner. Werner half promised to sell it to him someday and Mali wanted to remain in position and in Werner's good graces to acquire it. Mali always had a false

what Werner called “slimy” artificial friendliness when dealing with Werner. He built Werner up to the ceiling which he well knew would please Werner. Werner loved people to appreciate his worth and his success and he basked in the glory of any praise that came his way.

People tended to fall into two camps. Those who loved or liked Werner and were impressed with his success in life. The other camp was those people who were terribly jealous of him and hated him for being so successful. Werner liked to have around him people who were impressed with his management abilities, his ability to make money and his psyche which emanated power and knowledge. Werner was brilliant beyond measure, a financial wizard. The figures he could carry around in his head and manipulate were astounding. He kept the checkbooks for both nursing homes in his head. He knew the balances of both without having to balance any books. His head for figures was uncanny. He could add a whole column of 5 figures, all columns at once, and come up with an exact figure. When I was first at St. Anne’s I watched him look down on a sheet full of 5 column figures, add all columns at the same time, put a figure on the bottom, then run to the bathroom across the hall. While he was in the bathroom I took a calculator and added up the columns to see how close he was. He was right on the money!

Boy, was Werner ever a pack rat! Clean, dirty, new, old, fixed, repaired, broken, splintered, rusted, stopped short, never to run again – he saved it. You should have seen the nursing home basements and storage areas, and our basement and breezeway and garage. Packed solid to the rafters, with only a little walkway. Most of it pure, unadulterated junk! Broken pieces of chairs, couches, wheelchairs, walkers, canes. All over the place. We had bags full of dirty, stinky clothes and linen sitting in our garage for years. I never could figure any reason for it being there and it remained there until after Werner died, when I threw it. But he saved a lot of money by using those spare parts for repair instead of buying new. And was he ever a prudent buyer! He would check all over town to find the best deal. No one knew the best places to shop like he did.

What used to flabbergast Peggy and I were his repair people down in inner city Detroit. We used to go down to Bond Bailey just to the east of the Ambassador bridge to get things welded. It looked like the entrance to a speak easy. You almost had to have a pass word to get in. There was a large very old fashioned, high homemade wood door. It was pad locked. You had to call out to get in. When you got in it was a dirt floor inside and there were many people working on various things in there. The boss would take your broken item and give you a price. They rebuilt the Waukeshaw rig engine for Werner. They were always very reasonable. Understandably so as the building was paid for eons ago and the taxes were probably under a \$1000 per year, if that. I always wondered where he found these places.

Another favorite of his was a gas station by the Rouge overpass of I-75 around the corner from the Woodmere cemetery. Was it ever run down, but the men were competent and the prices were cheap and the work was done right. There was broken cement outside, and broken glass lying everywhere and weeds 3 feet high growing out of the cracks in the cement. When we brought my mom’s car to be fixed he had a puppy pit bull to protect the station from robbers and local drug addicts. When we went to pick the car up the puppy was gone. A customer had swung back later in the day and had stolen the puppy. I was scared of that dog.

Werner used to get his parts from the Central Auto Parts junkyard. Boy, was he ever their best customer. Even they suggested that maybe it was time for the old car to give up the ghost. When

I bought a bunch more parts for that sad old Cadillac the Central owner told me he was going to have a bumper sticker printed up for Werner which read, "This car totally rebuilt with Central Auto Parts". Werner didn't think that was funny. Those owners knew Werner very well and they did give Werner and me the very best that they had available in their yard.



My first GMC van with the bad engine

When my van engine crapped out for the 3rd time with only 29,000 miles on it I went to them for a new engine. They gave me one that only had 15000 miles on it and it did run like a top. And then they told me who to take it to to have the engine put in and that company did a most professional job. The engine cost me \$500 and the labor \$650. Sharon, the Administrator, drove down there with me at dusk in the dead of winter and drove me home and then later back again. We got so lost that we just laughed at ourselves. We almost didn't get there before he closed for the day, but we did make it in the nick of time.



Edna & newborn Harrigan in front of new full size van

Werner and I sold that van shortly after that and Werner bought me the new white full sized GM van. He said he bought that for me because I had always treated him with dignity and respect through out his many illnesses.



Werner & Sandy Wilhelm



Eldorado



Eldorado

Werner used to have his old junk autos serviced at the Sunoco station on Auburn just around the bend from where Mound turns into Auburn. That mechanic kept telling Werner that car payments on a new car would be much cheaper than repair bills on his old, tired, worn out Cadillac. I think

it was a challenge to Werner to see how long he could keep a car on the road. He had 224, 000 miles on the old brown Eldorado. It still ran okay when he gave it up. The reason he gave up on the car is that the ball joints were completely gone and they couldn't repair it and they told him that one day when he was making a turn in the road the entire front end was going to come off and he was going to have one doozy of an accident. He rode that way for awhile, and in fact that was his car when I met him. One day when we were riding around in that car he told me that little bit of information and he was quite concerned about the danger for shortly thereafter he went to the auto auction and bought his new baby blue Cadillac with the white top. That one lasted over 150,000 miles and needed fewer repairs.



Werner Wilhelm II

One funny story about the next Cadillac, the diesel. It's engine was giving out, as diesels are wont to do. He was hoping to get it covered under warranty. He had just over 50, 000 miles on it, just over the warranty period. So he asked Charlie to turn back the speedometer on the car. Charlie took the speedometer out, took it in the basement and put a reverse drill to it. While all the staff were upstairs enjoying the Christmas Party, Charlie and I were in the basement with the speedometer. Once Charlie got it back to 47,000 miles he brought it back up and put it in the car. Werner then took it to the Cadillac dealership to have it repaired. The dealership, being no fool, pulled the wheel and the odometer there read the actual miles, just over 50, 000. Thus Werner had to pay to have a new diesel engine put in. He put another diesel in I thought it was a poor decision as the diesel car engines were proving to be crap. But this was during the oil crisis and diesel was cheaper than gasoline so Werner thought he was saving money. The problem with that was the fact that you couldn't always find a diesel gas station and he was always running out of gas. It might prove to be a mighty long walk, looking for a station that sells diesel.

Then Werner had a Boron credit card which he used for gas. One day he picked up a nurse, Beverly La Chat for work and stopped at the Boron station around the corner on Harper from St. Anne's for gas on a Sunday afternoon. He went to pay with his Boron card and the station attendant tried to keep the card because the terminal said to pick up this card and he would get a \$50 reward for turning it in. A real big fight ensued between Werner and the station attendant and the cops ended up being called. The attendant told the cops he wanted the card to collect the \$50 and Werner said it was his card and he wanted it back. The cop confiscated the card and took it to the station. On Monday Werner paid the outstanding bill and got his credit card back from the police station.

Another time Werner had an Amoco credit card that he was using in Bowling Green Ohio at the Amoco station there to pay for gas and goodies, like he always did when he stopped there frequently. Well this time they told him he could only pay for the gas with the card and had to pay cash for the pop and candy. He blew up, screaming that he always paid for both there with

the credit card. They argued back and forth and finally the cops were called. The cops told him the station made the payment rules, not him, so he paid with cash and left.

Later I had to put him on my American Express card as he was going to the Caribbean islands and had no credit cards. I got him one with his name on it and he went off to the islands one happy camper. I sure was not happy when I got the next bill. There were 4 large charges on the bill and every one of them were fraudulent in some way. But for once, Werner argued this out himself with American express and all fraudulent charges were removed.

Later I added Werner to my Discover Card and the card came with his name on, well, his first name was correct, anyways. I laughed when showing this card later to Steve saying Werner had a reason for getting married so now his name could appear correctly on the discover card – on this card his name read Werner Bender.

We only had one really big snowstorm from 1981 to 1984 when I was working as an Administrator at St. Anne's. Werner got a phone call that there were only a few aides in as they could not get to work. Werner told me to hop in his car and he drove me down there, slipping and sliding all the way. When we got there he had me call all the aides not in and tell them I was going to drive over and pick them up. I told the aide living on Ashland to stand out on Alter and I'd pick her up. She refused, saying the Negroes in her neighborhood were dangerous and she would not stand out in the open. I then drove to Ashland, honked my horn, she got in the car and I backed out of Voigt because my car would not turn around in all the slush. I was scared of being stuck. I picked up enough aides to keep the place running for that day.

Elfriede Kreschner was by far our best nurse. At the time I took over all nurses were rotating to a different floor each month. But under my time we started on Medicare per Werner's decision and a Medicare floor needed a top rate nurse so I decided to put Elfriede permanently there. I later asked her if she liked having her own floor and I guess she really didn't like it as it was more work due to more acute patients.

Elfriede was born and raised in Germany so she and Werner had an affinity for one another. Elfriede also had a German friend called Lucy Frambach who lived in Canada. They would invite Werner and I over to dinner at Lucy's house once per year and also invite Uncle Kurt if he was here. They would speak German to one another and always had a very good time. Elfriede was born in what is now Poland and when the Russians were advancing everyone ran on foot to escape the Russians and Elfriede, only 12 years old, could not run as fast as her parents and as a consequence, became totally lost. She was taken in by a middle aged woman who was also escaping the Russians and was later raised by this woman as she never again found her parents. She later registered with a central German registry to be found by her parents but they never contacted her nor were they ever registered.

Diane was in charge of the second floor. She had a real nice personality but had a real IV drug problem. One day a nurse on the next shift informed me that Diane had the doctor put almost all of the patients on that floor on demerol. I had seen these patients on a daily basis and although they were all non alert none of them appeared to be in any distress – they had calm facial expressions and were not fidgeting in any way. I asked the doctor why he put all those seemingly comfortable patients on demerol and he replied that Diane said they needed it. I suggested he

take a look at those patients closely and d/c demerol for all patients who appeared comfortable. He d/cd all of them. Then on a Sunday all hell broke loose on the second floor. Diane received a telephone call from a resident's family and while she was talking on the phone she passed out cold on the floor. An aide picked up the phone and told the person on the other end that the nurse had overdosed! The aide then called an ambulance and the nurse was taken to the hospital. By the time she got there she regained consciousness and refused to let them draw blood.

On the first floor we often had Mrs. Theodorou, a nice sensible sober older nurse. But I felt so sorry for her because she had arthritis so bad that she could hardly walk she was in so much pain.

On the afternoon shift we often had Helen Handley. She was an older, peaceful nurse who liked Werner. She was slow and laid back and we often had to prod her to do her minimum amount of work, but her heart was in the right place. Werner liked her. But when I first started working at St. Anne's Mrs. Handley got me into hot water with her lie to cover up her failure to properly admit a patient. Right after I started we got a notice that someone was suing St. Anne's because their mother got a bed sore while here. I called Mrs. Handley and Lynnette into my office as they were the two nurses on duty the day this woman was admitted and they and done the initial paper work. This woman was only in the nursing home a very short period of time so I was perplexed as to how she could have gone from smooth skin to a bad bed sore in a week or so. So I called the 2 nurses in, told them about the pending law suit and asked them whether or not this woman had any bedsores when she came in the nursing home. They said she definitely had a stage II decubitus when she came in. I checked the chart. It said nothing about decubitus. I asked them about that. They said they forgot to write it on the chart. I told them if that was the case they should put that in the chart. So Helen whipped out her funky light aqua blue pen and wrote stage II decubitus on the admission nursing assessment form. It stuck out like a sore thumb! Written in a bright aqua color and the letters were twice the size of the rest of the text. Later on when the insurance company got a hold of the chart and questioned the 2 nurses as to that entry, they said they did it because Sandy told them to! I told the insurance company the above, but they said after the stupidity of the nurses answers they felt that they had to pay off and get out of that suit. I was so disgusted. I tell them to tell truthfully what happened on admission, they lie about it to please me and keep themselves out of trouble with the boss, then turn around and say they did it because I told them to!

During my time at St. Anne's the daughter of one of Werner's doctors applied for and was hired as an RN. One day she went to Werner and asked him for the next afternoon off as she had to take her mom to the lawyer's office to discuss a financial settlement in their pending divorce. Werner gave her the day off and the next day after that she still was not at work, but she was in the newspaper. She had taken her mom to the lawyer's office and evidently the mother did not like the terms of the financial settlement for in the middle of the discussion she pulled out a gun and started shooting at everybody. Miraculously, she hit no one. But she and the daughter were in a heap of trouble.

Our crowning glory of total incompetence was Carolyn Shipke. She was an RN and worked full time there although every one knew of her total incompetence in all areas, not just nursing. But she had an RN degree and we couldn't get an RN and the health dept demanded that you have an RN on duty on the day shift, so thus Mrs Schipke came into play in all her glory. One night she

punched in on the midnight shift and then disappeared. The midnight aides called Werner and woke him up saying they couldn't find the nurse anywhere although they had seen her earlier in the shift. Werner told them to go floor to floor and comb the entire nursing home until they found her. They called him back and said they went on all 3 nursing floors and she simply was not there. He asked them if they checked the basement and they said no. He told them to go down there and look for her. They told him they were too scared to go into the basement at night. He told them to all go down there together for moral support. He then called them back and asked if they had found her yet. Yup, they had. Where was she, Werner asked? Standing naked in the time clock room, staring straight ahead at the time clock, they told him.

Another time the day nurse came to Werner and said it was now 2 hours into her shift and Mrs. Schipke still had not left the 1st floor nurse's station and she needs to get her out of there so she can sit down at the desk and do her charting. So Werner called one of his "star" aides and asked the aide why Carolyn was still sitting there. Because she got evicted from her 3rd rate motel room and has no where to go, they replied. She has all her earthly possessions in her station wagon, but it is too cold for her to sit in the car till the next shift. Why doesn't she just get a room in another motel, Werner asked? Because she does not have the mental capacity to do so, replied the aide. Werner tossed the aide a phone book and told her to open it up to motels and then call all of them around here and find Carolyn the cheapest room they could find. So the aide sat down, called around and in an hour she had a new motel room for Carolyn and took her to it and got her settled.

Another time I was painting the 1st room right across from the 2nd floor nurse's station. It was the hardest room to restore because it rained the hardest in this room and the black tar just ran down the wall behind the headboards. What a mess! I painted over that black stuff 3 or 4 times in the course of an evening before the white would hold without the tar bleeding through. I was so exhausted, rolling and rolling and rolling. And the entire 5 hours I worked on that room Mrs. Schipke sat on her chair at the nurse's station, and just stared at me, without moving and without blinking even for the entire time. No emotion on her face whatsoever, just a blank, unwavering stare! Spooky.

Another time Mrs Schipke was on duty when the nurses aides came running saying a patient's hands were turning blue. Mrs Schipke got there and discovered that not only the finger tips were blue, but the blueness was traveling up her fingers as well. The aides and the nurse ran to get the oxygen which was a real fiasco as no one remembered where they left the oxygen bottle. Finally they found it and as the nurse was putting the oxygen on the patient she was now blue half way up her hands and it was still traveling. The nurse called the ambulance and by the time they got there the patient was blue half way up her arm and she had just expired. It was close to quitting time and the nurse did not feel like doing all the paperwork so she gave each ambulance driver \$5 and told them "When you took this patient out of here, she was still alive". 20 minutes later the hospital ER doctor called real huffy asking, "What was the condition of this patient when she left your facility!" He was expecting to be given the patients blood pressure, pulse and respiration, in other words, her vital signs. The nurse's response? "When she left here she had a little smile on her face". Aw, #\$\$%^@ was the doctor's response.

Another midnight “winner” was Beverly. One night the girls called Werner after we were asleep and told him that Bev had come on duty and punched in, but then around midnight she took off and was making a round of the local bars. We have no nurse, they wailed and we called everyone else and no one else can come in. Do you all have about \$5 Werner asked the girls? Hold on, we’ll check , was their reply. Ya, they came back on the line and said to Werner, if we pool our money we can come up with \$5. A cab will be coming with Bev in it, Werner told them, and when it shows up give him the \$5 and I’ll pay you back tomorrow. Werner then called the cab company and told the dispatcher to call Rufus, one of their drivers, and have Rufus call Werner from a pay phone at his home number. 15 minutes later Werner gets a phone call from Rufus. “Remember that nurse you picked up out of the bar for me a couple of months back,” Werner asked Rufus.. Ya, Rufus replied. “Well I want you to make the rounds of all the bars in the neighborhood and when you find this nurse put her in your cab and bring her back to St. Anne’s for me and the aides will give you \$5, okay”. Okay.

About ½ hour later the aides call Werner in an uproar. “Mr! They cried, she’s back and she’s dead drunk and she’s roaring in anger and we’re all scared to death of her”. They told him. “I’ll tell you what to do,” Werner told them. Give her a blanket and a pillow and have her lay down on the sofa in the 1st floor dayroom and she’ll soon be fast asleep if she’s as drunk as you tell me. And as you know Mrs. Shopinski, the Director of Nursing lives really close by. If there is any medical emergency call her and she’ll come right in. Later Werner called them back. There was total relief in their voice. She’s sound asleep on the couch and we have peace and safety again. Thank you, Mr. Wilhelm. The next day they had to wake her so she could punch out and go home. But she was still so drunk they had to hold her up by the armpits and put her in her car, after walking her across the ice. I hope you weren’t driving the opposite way that day!

Another time Beverly’s son came into the nursing home when his mother was on the midnight shift and he tried to break into the kitchen by using his mother’s credit card to spring the lock, but he failed and the credit card landed inside the kitchen where it was found the next day. Later on that month her son Conrad had started his own bug spraying business and he came into Werner’s office trying to get a bug spraying contract without success. Werner liked Conrad and he would sit and visit with him when the boy would come to St. Anne’s.

Boy, did St. Anne’s ever have cockroaches! The more we sprayed the more they reproduced. Finally one day Werner got disgusted and told the bug company they had better do something drastic as they were not living up to their contract to kill the bugs. So they made an appointment to fog all 4 floors. It was warm summertime so we sent the patients up to the roof patio for an all day picnic and the bug company, Cindy and me and a few volunteers went to work on the bugs. We went ahead of the fogging company and used a spray that brought their little brown bodies out in the open and when they were crawling all over the place the foggers came and killed them almost dead. Cindy and I were armed with fly swatters and we swatted everyone we saw, alive or just barely crawling. Let’s count how many we kill, Cindy and I and the other volunteer agreed. The count at the end of the day? 10,000 cockroaches! And they were very much still in evidence after that! Yecch! Boy, did Cindy and I ever have a headache at the end of that day!

Wil Mar all through the years never had any cockroaches, well never, that is, until Will Cope, a black male LPN came in with his radio. The radio had been to every inner city nursing home and

was loaded with cockroaches who lived in and around the warm innards of the radio. So when Will played it at Wil Mar his little unseen army marched full steam ahead. In no time they found Wil Mar's kitchen and residence was firmly established. For the next several years we sprayed to no avail. They say if an atom bomb hits the earth and destroys all living things, the cockroaches will be the last thing to die. They sure are hardy little buggers. We had a service and John Hefferon got chemicals in a spray canister and went at it himself. The bugs won, hands down. Today we are totally cockroach free. What happened, you say if the spray regimens were total failures? The City of Utica exterminated every last bug for us! Unintentionally of course. They broke open all the old sewers to replace them with new ones on Brownell street and in so doing they let loose a veritable army of mice. Boy, did we ever have mice! Upstairs, downstairs, everywhere. We set trap upon trap, snap traps, sticky traps, poison traps up high. You name it, we tried it. But the big hero in ridding us of mice was a patient named Red. He seriously studied the myriad of mice coming and going from his room, which was pretty much over the kitchen and he asked the maintenance man to bring him a glass, a small plate, 6 mouse traps, and some peanut butter and some bread and cheese. Red then set to work putting the plate on the glass, putting the cheese and peanut butter and bread on the plate and then setting the 6 traps at the base of the glass. The mice fell for it. On their way up the glass they stopped to eat the tid bit on the snap trap and snap! Snap! The traps went day and night. At the end Red counted 326 mice he had captured. He sure kept the maintenance man busy emptying and resetting those traps. But what was the ending of this story was the fact that the mice, while they were alive and running all over the place, had eaten every single cockroach! When the mice were gone, so was every last cockroach!

Will Cope called himself an independent contractor, meaning he wanted to get paid with a company yellow check and he signed that he would pay all of his own employment taxes. Werner only used him when we couldn't cover a shift with our full time staff of nurses. At times when we were short of nurses he was the only way we could cover a shift, so Werner would call him. Werner liked him and would pal around with him for short periods of time in the office when Will was on duty. I was very leery of Will. On several occasions when he was on duty a patient would show up the next day with bruises, sometimes rather severe. One time the patient had bruises on his face and chest and when I asked Will how it happened he said the patient fell into the basin in the bathroom. The patient was unable to tell me what happened. None of the staff on duty at the time knew what happened and they were also a bit afraid of Will. I would ask Werner to try to get anyone else first before he called Will. Werner felt my concerns were not justified. Will had a Gestapo type of way of running his shift and I was fearful of his ways of handling things when the day shift management left the building. Later on in years I mentioned to Werner that he had not used Will for over a year. He said he had called Will to come to work but Will told Werner that he was on dialysis as his kidneys had totally failed and was not able to work. They had a good talk and Werner asked him many questions about dialysis as Werner's kidneys were also beginning to fail at that point in time. A year later I again asked about Will and Werner said he had called over to his residence and was told that Will had died. Will sure was awfully young to have had kidney disease. I often wondered what happened that his kidney's failed so early in life.

We had a funny mouse story. During a health dept survey I was sitting with the nurse trying to keep her distracted so she would have less time to try to roast us with her negative findings.

While I sat there the only mouse that was ever in the nurses' office ran out from between the cabinets and stood there in between the front of the cabinets and looked right and left, tweaking his nose and moving his whiskers. Oh no, I thought, I hope she doesn't see him! Just then he started running for my feet! I was horrified. What can I do to keep him away from me, I asked? Instinctively I stomped my feet several times. He ran back where he came from. The nurse looked up from her chart at me with a quizzical look on her face, wondering what in tarnation I was doing. She then with a frown on her face returned to her chart. The mouse came back out again. He twitched his nose, moved his eyes and whiskers and I thought, What now? It didn't take me long to find out what now. The little bugger ran straight ahead, right up on and over the nurse's foot. He ran right over her nylon! She looked up, a quizzical look on her face, paused to think a moment, then returned to her work. He then ran into the heater on the other side of the nursing home. What a relief it was to me. At least he's back out of sight, I thought. At that point she said she had work to do and I could leave the room. Shortly after that they all convened in that room and put their heads together as to how the survey was going to this point. After they came out of the room they asked me if we had a pet policy. Thinking they meant for Bear, I said yes. They said they would like to see the one that covered our pet mouse. Oh, oh, the cat's out of the bag, I thought. It turns out that the mouse left the heater, ran up the chair Bruce was sitting in and then ran up his suit coat and then got onto the back of the chair and ran back and forth over his collar! This was the first and only mouse we ever had in there and it had to appear on the very day that the health dept was doing their annual survey! .

And then there was Mrs. Miller, another space case. Shortly after I started working there we discovered that the Italian lady in the first room on the 3rd floor was sent to us from a hospital with active TB. The hospital concealed this fact from us as they were way overdue for discharging her. Well, we were in a panic, hoping none of the staff or patients had contracted this disease over the past 3 months. We decided to get a TB test on everyone to see if we had any positives. Well Mrs. Miller gathered all the staff together and told them that for sure they all had TB and would have to go to a sanitarium to be healed. She then proceeded to assign rooms in the sanitarium to groups of the girls based on who liked who the most. Everyone was totally hysterical by the time management got involved and calmed them down. (No one contracted TB from that patient fortunately.)

Another story made the rounds about Mrs. Miller. It was said that she would look at an apparently healthy patient and tell them that they had something fatal and were not long for this world. And the aides swore that when she told a patient this, within days the patient would expire. The alert patients became very frightened of this nurse and would check their meds very carefully if she was giving it to them. One day she told Inez that she was not long for the world and Inez nearly jumped out of her skin with anxiety. Then Inez kicked up a royal fuss when this nurse tried to give her a green liquid she never saw before. This liquid was not ordered by the doctor and when questioned the nurse said she put it in the cart herself because Inez needed it. Needless to say, the green stuff got removed and Mrs. Miller got a job at another unsuspecting facility.

Lynette was a real lively RN on duty at St. Anne's. She had all the aides hopping, and as soon as Werner and I left the building, it was party time as far as Lynette was concerned. One day she brought in a charcoal BBQ grill, charcoal and lighter fluid and a whole mess of ribs. She made

one mean fire with a ton of lighter fluid and then threw the ribs over the fire. When the ribs were done she had first dibs, then was going to share the rest after she had her fill. But it never came to that for within 20 minutes Lynette became violently ill from consuming the lighter fluid and started throwing up over the balcony of the second floor, then she ran out of the building in the middle of her shift and went home.

Lynette was always a loose canon. She was very intelligent but had little control over her emotions. One time Elfriede, a very stern, very competent no nonsense German nurse came to Werner's office and handed him a driver's license she had found on the floor and said he might find this interesting. She gave him a knowing look and then walked back out of the administrator's office and returned to her floor. Werner and I looked at the proffered license. It had Lynette's picture on it, her cousin's name and someone else's address. Werner kept it in his desk drawer.

Lynette had worked in a hospital before coming to us. She had nursed a white man who had some money. She was so attentive to him that before he died she talked him into transferring his house into her name. She was quite an operator when she wanted to be.

She pretended to be loyal to Werner but went to the health dept behind his back. When we hired Jeri Formaz before she had her permanent license, Lynette called the health dept on her and us. As Lynette was leaving St. Anne's she called the Health Dept and turned in a telephone book full of complaints on us. She wanted to Be Director of Nursing but when Werner decided she was just too undisciplined for that position, she went wild with anger and turned against Werner.

Ann Needham worked for Werner at both St. Anne's and later at Wil Mar. She was loyal to Werner and an average nurse. One time in about 1991 while I was going through cancer treatments Ann bolted out of Wil Mar in the middle of her shift and then never worked again. It turned out she had colon cancer. She had surgery and then chemotherapy which made her deathly ill. Werner coaxed her to come back to work and she said she would after the treatments. The treatments were making her so deathly ill and so exhausted she said. But she never came back and when I asked someone about her they told me she died. I went home and told Werner that Ann had died. "Who told you that!?" He asked. He gave them orders never to tell me that someone died of cancer while I was in the middle of my battle with the dreaded disease. So the same thing happened about the same time with Jake the night guard in Sebring. I heard from Werner that he had cancer in his chest, was operated on and was getting high tech treatments from a top rated cancer center in Florida and was very happy with his progress. When I asked Werner about Jake he was very vague. When I asked someone in Sebring they told me Jake, who was so happy with his treatments and so hopeful, had died. Werner wanted to spare me this discouraging news as Werner wanted me to fight and not give up when I heard that those around me had all lost their battles.

Werner was very kind and generous to his aides, both with his Wilhelm interest free loan company and with his lavish praise for their hard work. He was a father figure to them, in many cases the only kind father they ever knew. He supported his aides and backed them up both at work when they were picked on by the nurse or Director of Nursing and also when they were attacked by outsiders, notably when process servers were coming after his dear little lambs, as he called them.

He used to run the process servers out of the nursing home by running into them with his belly and pushing them sideways until they were pushed clear out of the door and then he would take his key and lock the outside door so they couldn't get in again. One time when he knew a process server was coming he called the aide in and told her she was fired, to immediately punch out and leave right now by the break room door but to come back and see him on Monday. Totally bewildered as she had done nothing wrong the aide left and came back 4 days later as she was told to do. While she was gone the process server came and Werner told him she didn't work here any longer and so he went away empty handed. Werner then hired her back and gave her a yellow check to make up for the time she lost.

One time a woman's baby was real sick so Werner gave her money and then drove her and her baby to Ann Arbor to the University Hospital. And there were many a time Werner got a call in the middle of the night, put his clothes on and went to the local police station and bailed one of his little lambs out. And any employee who had been there over a month was eligible for Werner's interest free loan company. Anyone was good for up to \$400. In the case of Charlie Steele the long term maintenance man, he gave him \$2000 as a down payment for a house. Charlie was so grateful to Werner that he spoke about it years later, saying he never would have gotten that house without that loan from Werner.

Most employees paid the money back , but there were a few exceptions, like Darlene, who got \$400 and left town the next day with her new boyfriend. Both St. Anne's and Wil Mar had a folder full of pages and pages of loans. When they paid the loan back they got their IOU returned to them. They would then often turn around and start another loan. Werner said they needed this safety net as they didn't make that much, had no savings accounts and often had no relatives to borrow from.

Werner had his favorites, whom he called "his Stars". He would often give them a lovely hand written note telling them they were his star. They loved receiving this praise for their work and their loyalty. Loyalty is one trait Werner demanded from his employees. If you did your work in at least a minimally acceptable way and were loyal to Werner and to Wil Mar you had a job. But no matter how proficient you were if you were not loyal, you were run out on a rail. You could talk nasty about Werner and me all you wanted and that was acceptable, just do not go against Wil Mar on the outside.

Werner's favorite Stars at St. Anne's were Donna Bell and Jane Wetherholt. Everybody had a fit about Jane being his star as she was a really lousy worker and did not treat the patients very good, but Werner said she was his star as she always came to his office and told him what was going on on the floor. She and Donna Bell were his underground telegraph office. They kept Werner's pulse on the operation without him having to be on the floor all the time. Werner also liked Lou Whitehead a lot as he would always come and socialize with Werner.

At Wil Mar in the early years before I took over the nursing home his stars were Mrs. Hefferon, RN, his Director of Nursing as well as Michelle Barg and Betty Barg. Mrs. Hefferon loved him and hoped to marry him so she was quite affectionate with him before I came on the scene. But at the same time without his knowing it Mrs. Hefferon was spending hours and hours of time at Margaret the secretary's desk helping her with the receivables, and just before I came to work

there they discovered that there was \$50,000 lost from non billed Medicaid and another \$50,000 in patient pay cash missing. Margaret disappeared and left state when Werner turned the books over to the police for investigation and Mrs. Hefferon left after she saw there would be no action taken.

A funny Michelle Barg story. Werner was interviewing a potential aide hiree when Michelle was on duty. Michelle stared at that girl as she sat in the front office and when the girl left Michelle ran in to talk to Werner. She said, "Mr., don't hire her. She's nothing but a drunk! Every bar I go into she's there!" Both Werner and I took a few minutes to digest that one. If Michelle is in every bar the other girl is in, does that give Michelle a drinking problem too?

Michelle was a real pretty long time employee so when Rae Ann, the big fat cook left, I offered Michelle the chance to become the Certified Dietary Manager and take over the kitchen. Michelle was a nurse's aide but under Mrs. Hefferon she often cooked in the kitchen and did a nice job with the food. Michelle accepted. Werner then enrolled her in the University of Florida Dietary Manager's course in Gainesville. The course material came and I started Michelle on the lessons, helping her with the first lesson. I waited and waited for her to finish the second lesson. It never got completed. I asked why. Finally she quietly and pensively admitted why it never got done. Michelle never learned to read and write. She went through 12 years in the Utica Community School system and no one ever taught her to read! It was a shock as her mother was excellent in reading and writing and even did nurse's level charting to perfection before we had a nurse on every shift. I then did lesson two, explained it all to her and then told her to copy what I had written. Lesson 2 still did not come back. She could not even copy what I had written. So I typed it and had her sign it. Lesson 3 never got completed. She felt totally overwhelmed by the lessons and resigned and went back on the nursing floor. With all the trouble she caused Werner later I felt that she blamed us for the fact that she could not complete her lessons. Her friend Laurie took over and started the CDM course. Laurie turned out to be one of the biggest trouble makers and in the heat of the employee problem I fired Laurie in the middle of the day in the physical therapy room. Laurie was shocked that she had lost her job and told me I couldn't do that, that she'd be back, which fortunately never happened.

Michelle was one of the big instigators of all the problems with the employees in 1985, which really hurt Werner as she and her mother professed all through the years to love him dearly and she was proud of being one of his stars. Michelle hung on to the bitter end, being the last of the trouble makers that we were biding our time to get rid of. The existing employees were tired of having her around and told her so. When she tried to cause trouble by saying something to shame and upset one of the employees an older employee was sick of her high and mighty attitude and said to Michelle, "hey Michelle, don't try acting so high and mighty. I remember when you were 15 years old and got pregnant with our present Administrator John who was then 14. I remember how they got you out of that mess by getting you an abortion. So now we knew why Michelle, who had already disgraced herself permanently in Werner's estimation, had come to him and told him vehemently not to hire John when he came in to apply for the Administrator's job! Michelle left, tail between her legs, totally out of the in crowd in May of that year. We all breathed a sigh of relief. When we heard a pile of the trouble makers went to a nursing home in Romeo we felt sorry for that owner but said nothing. We had gotten the lice out of our pelt and that was good enough for us. Gone were the days when they took a pipe wrench to our sinks in the middle of

the night and the water was flowing freely down the halls like a fountain in the early am. Gone was the wholesale thievery. Gone was all the schedule and other paperwork being stolen off out bulletin boards.

Gone were people breaking into our offices in the middle of the night and breaking open filing cabinets and rifling through our papers. Gone was my need to go into the nursing home at 4 am and find them sleeping and having to fire them after writing them up. Gone was the trouble makers calling meetings and trying to haul Werner over the coals and drag concessions out of him while running a tape recorder in the corner unbeknownst to him. Gone were the staff giving us dirty looks as we walked through the facility as though we were the ones causing the uproar. Gone were the parties where we had two camps of employees, one bringing in their own food and gathering together in one end of the hall.

It was such a relief to once again have nice, friendly open employees who loved Werner and liked me and who tried to please him and do little extra things for him. To once again have parties where everyone was in one accord and enjoyed each other's company and ate the same party food. Gone were the people taking pipe wrenches and wrecking the place as soon as we walked out the door. To be one big happy family again was such a relief for Werner. He always ran his nursing homes as though they were a family, the old folks being the grandparents, the Administration being the parents and the aides being the kids. The aides loved having a warm, loving protective father who was there for them when they needed him. They could always go to him with their problems and he always had time and interest to listen to what they would have to say. If they were being treated unfairly by their supervisors Werner would have a meeting and straighten things out for his little lambs. He was always very protective of his first line staff and tried to make their lives as easy as possible for them. If they needed money he would lend it to them. If they needed protection from the law, he would step in and help them, either by bailing them out or by throwing a process server out to protect his lambs from being garnished. Werner was such a riot when he would get out of his chair, circle around a process server and tell him OUT!!, then walk toward him and if the guy didn't move he would push him right out of the nursing home by sticking out his belly and running into the guy with it. The guy would have no choice except to hop on one foot or the other until he was pushed right out of the nursing home. Werner would then take his key out of his pocket and lock the front door in the guy's face. And a few weeks later when a cop would tell Werner that was a process server he pushed out of the nursing home Werner would have a dead pan, non committal, totally disinterested look on his face.

Werner was a loving, benign father figure to his little lambs. He was very understanding of their short comings and tolerated much from them as long as they weren't mean to the residents, or disloyal to Wil Mar. Disloyalty was the one thing that got you run out on a rail at Wil Mar. Oh, you could talk bad about Werner and me behind our backs and every word would come back to us sooner or later, but that didn't get you in dutch. Just ask Betty Holdwick! Boy, did she ever run us down behind our backs in the break room. And much of what she said ended up being repeated verbatim to us by other loyal aides. But when the chips were down Betty was on our side. She was a friend to us when we had all that uproar with the bad employees in 1985. Werner and I never forgot the kindness shown to us by those handful of aides who remained loyal to us at a time when we really needed a friend. But when she was in Werner's office she would hug him

and talk nice to him and tell him how much she cared for him. Two timing? Yes, I guess you would have to say that. Disloyal? By our definition, no.

Werner had many a day full of frustration due to the foibles of his little lambs, but he understood their problems and worked within the parameters of their limitations. Werner often told Mali when Mali would get so upset with their actions, "If they functioned as well as we do they wouldn't be aides, they would be administrators." Poor judgement on the part of aides caused many a heartbreak for us, the residents and the families. Putting a resident on the toilet and walking away would result in a fall now and then. Telling them over and over not to do that still did not stop it from happening now and again. Failure to put bed rails up would result in a fall from bed. Not cutting up or pureeing food would result in a choking incident. Not changing resident's diapers every time they had an accident could sometimes result in bed sores. All the inservice in the world never seemed to correct the problem. Werner understood that his little lambs, by their very nature, could not remain focused for very long.

Werner also understood and was saddened by their alcohol and drug abuse. He knew these problems were very prevalent in our society at large, especially in the present times. In his earlier days as manager of 1919 Wyoming, he watched Carl Schneider drink himself under the table every night, night after night. He knew there was no way Carl would ever remain sober. But Carl did do his job quite well and was loyal to Werner. Werner in turn used to let Carl eat dinner and watch TV with him and his mother. Werner would also buy a case of beer for the evening. Werner would have 1 or 2 beers at most and Carl would drain down the case. Werner's Mama Martha would often tell Werner that Carl was a good man. When Martha was dying of cancer and was returning to Germany for stomach surgery, her advice to Werner was, "Werner, keep Carl, he's a good man". Carl did stay with Werner and was most loyal to him till the very end. Carl used to handle a lot of rowdy tenants for Werner, sparing Werner the aggravation of dealing with them after he got home from working all day at the G.M. Tech Center in Warren. One day Carl was arguing heatedly with an off the wall tenant when the tenant got mad at Carl and pushed him down a flight of steps. Carl hit his head at the bottom and died. The man got away with murdering Carl for the judge ruled the homicide accidental death. Werner really missed Carl and firmly believed in his heart that Carl's death was a homicide.

At Wil Mar we had a lot of drug addicts and some alcoholics. The same was true at St. Anne's. Employees would come to work hung over, and in the case of a new laundry worker I hired at St. Anne's, she would carry a liquor bottle in her laundry cart under the clean sheets. I ran into Werner's office a week after I had hired her and told him that she was drinking so heavy on the job that I would have to let her go. Don't be stupid, Werner replied to me. She's doing a great job. The more she drinks the faster she works! And when I observed her it was true. She was a great worker and when I visited St. Anne's in 1993 she was still there, still cranking out the laundry double time. Diane, the second floor nurse was a different, very sad story. She was always shooting up drugs. Every time you looked at her, her eyes were at half mast. Werner often had her in his office, telling her that she looked terrible on all those drugs, that the other nurses were complaining the she wasn't getting her work done due to being high. Diane would always deny being on any drugs and would pretend she didn't know what Werner was talking about. Other people warned Werner that she could sue him for accusing her of using drugs, but Werner was seldom concerned about the possibility of being sued for his outspokenness.

At Wil Mar Werner had to let Gary go for drugs because they were making him wild. When Werner let him go he had his hand and arm in a cast from hurting himself while high. An hour after he left he came back really high and was threatening to hit Werner over the head with his cast. The Wil Mar aides were circling around Werner's office, very frightened that there was going to be violence. Some one called Edna up from the kitchen and told her of the danger. Edna stood behind Gary and held one of our heavier gold chairs in both her hands, ready to slug Gary over the head with the chair if he tried to lunge over the desk and strike Werner. But he ended up leaving relatively peacefully. Werner handled out of control inebriated employees usually in a low key manner, sometimes they ended up in a shouting match. One time a cross eyed kitchen helper by the name of Linda got totally out of control while Werner was inspecting the kitchen. When he pointed out her short comings she flew off the handle and started opening refrigerators and slamming them shut as hard as she could throw the doors. Werner told her to "Get out of here". He merely meant to go upstairs and cool off. She thought she was fired and left the premises. Werner was surprised when she didn't come back down and let it be known that she was not fired. But she had bigger fish to fry. She went to social security and told them that she got fired because she couldn't handle the job because due to her mental disability the job made her too nervous to function. She got social security disability ad doesn't ever have to work anymore.

We had a lot of theft in the nursing home due to drug addicts needing money for a fix. The biggest theft was when they stole Fred Zanger's TV. A girl aide and a boy, both on drugs planned the TV heist. The girl took the patient to the bathroom and gave him a bath, and while she was bathing Fred the boy took the TV out of the upstairs bedroom and ran out the front door on Cass and put the TV in the trunk of his car which had been parked in front for just that purpose. The guy's foot prints in the snow lead right to the trunk of his car and the patient screamed about his TV being missing and the management called the police, and when the guy saw the police at the Cass Ave door he and the girl ran out that door, ran repeatedly over their previous foot prints, thus creating lots of overlaying foot prints and then the police were too stupid to follow through on the investigation and those two were never charged. I was the loser in this case. I had to give Fred my 14 inch TV to pacify him. Peggy later told me that his TV was found in the dumpster outside K Mart and Farmer Jack at 23 and Van Dyke and returned. That was not true. The so called TV that was recovered was an old 3rd hand model that was used to cover up the fact that the TV was never recovered.

Lots of food and some utensils were regularly stolen from the kitchen. After Rae Ann left aides told me she would pull her car up after hours and load cases of food from our kitchen into her little car. Werner got wise to what was happening and had all excess cases of food stored in the Brownell basement under lock and key. As needed the maintenance man would carry new cases over. The Brownell basement was often loaded with cases and cases of food because when something went on sale for a real cheap price Werner would load up on it. Sometimes we were cheated by their cheap prices, though. When we bought loads of tuna on sale and I opened a can one night to make tuna fish sandwiches for the residents the can was 1/3 full of water. So we didn't get a bargain at all, in fact when you allowed for the loss of tuna, we ended up paying more per lb for the "bargain" tuna. The same thing happened with the peaches too. And sometimes the Sysco rep would try to pull a fast one on us. Werner always ordered the fruit in broken pieces,

which was only half the cost of fancy whole fruit and had the same nutritional value. And sometimes we would get in stead the fancy stuff substituted for 3 times the cost per can. Werner was a very shrewd business man and always checked his orders and when he would see the price of the substituted peaches he would send the whole peach order back for credit. Most of the employee theft was due to drug usage, although some was due to them being low income and some to just plain avariciousness like when the aides would steal the residents' wedding rings right off their fingers.

Before I took over I felt that there was a good possibility that the resident trust fund was being ripped off, with the purchases ending up on the backs of the help instead of the residents. My first inquiry was for a 3 pack of film for a resident outing charged to Jim's account. I never saw Jim with a camera so I asked him if he bought the film. He said no. He also never authorized that purchase, either. I gave him his money back. I saw recent slips and underwear bought for heavy set residents. I asked trusted aides if that was in the residents in question drawers. The answer was no. I then instituted very tight controls on the spending and purchasing of the goods for residents from trust fund money. I allowed only trusted employees to shop. That ended the rape of the trust fund. One funny end of a theft from a resident. Mrs. Hefferon started marking the residents' clothes with a heavy black marker, putting their names on the items they owned. One day an aide came to work and when she turned her back to us, there showing through her uniform was the black marker name of a resident on the slip she was wearing. Caught in the act! Mrs. Hefferon made her take it off.

One funny set of incidents involved a half Indian employee, Laurie. She could be a lot of fun, but was she wild at times when she got ticked off or drunk on the job. Occasionally the managers would have to send her home out of the kitchen because she was just too drunk to cook. One time Werner went down into the kitchen and found her stinking drunk. He knew there was no way she could function, and due to her heavy load of ethanol which she had taken on earlier that day, she also tended to be loud and obnoxious. When Werner got down there and saw the disarray in the kitchen and commented on it to Laurie she became very belligerent towards Werner. Werner told her to go home and sober up and come back to work the next day sober. She verbally abused him all the way out of the kitchen and then left the building shouting obscenities about what she thought of Werner. They then came and got Werner out of the kitchen, telling him that Dan, the CPA was here. So Werner went up to the front office, greeted Dan and they started discussing business together in that front office. Werner sitting in his usual chair right by the Mc Clellan door and Dan sitting where the secretary usually sat. In the middle of their serious accounting discussion, in walks a very drunken Laurie. She had gone home, finished off the whole bottle of booze, got madder than ever at Werner throwing her off the job, and decided to go back into the nursing home and give him a piece of her mind. So she comes swaggering into the nursing home like a drunken cowboy in an old 3rd rate western movie, and starts doing an Indian war dance up and down the office in front of Werner, screaming threats at him while murmuring and screaming Indian words while doing her wild dance. Werner looked up at her, mentioned that she was stinking drunk, started repeating some of her Indian chant back at her, then chose to look back down at the matter at hand in front of him and to ignore the entire scene she was making. Not Dan, however. He stared straight ahead in total amazement, taking in the scene she was creating before his very eyes. Seeing she was having the desired effect on Dan she started addressing her hostilities at him, spitting on him as she ranted, spittle landing on his

suit. Laurie then looks at him with a belligerent look on her face and says pointedly to him, "Who are you?" He replied, I'm the accountant. Laurie then said to him, "Then give us some fucking money!"

Then in the middle of all this, the guy who drove her to Wil Mar gets out of the car and starts screaming obscenities at Werner, about how dare he throw Laurie out. Laurie stops her scene, stares at this guy with slitted eyes and then starts screaming at him that no one is going to talk to her boss that way! That Werner is her boss and he's gonna show some respect towards him. That Laurie can talk that way if she wants to but she isn't going to let anyone else disrespect her boss. She then threw her man friend out of the office, and then with one last fast Indian chant, she also left, grabbing the guy's arm and yanking him out of the nursing home with her. They hopped into the car and off they roared. Just another interesting day at Wil Mar.

Laurie was always a barrel of monkeys to be around. Always expect the unexpected with her. One time Toni was working with her in the kitchen. Laurie was chopping vegetables. Suddenly a big bee came in the kitchen window and Toni was terrified of being stung. A bee! Toni shouted. Get it! Laurie looked up from her chopping, with an unconcerned look on her face, waved her brand new laser knife the Werner had just bought at the bee and chopped him clean in two! She then went back to chopping as though nothing had happened. Yup, without cleaning off the knife first.

Another time Laurie and a bunch of Wil Mar employees went to the Shamrock bar in town. They drank themselves half under the table and a few hours later Laurie had to use the restroom. She got out of her chair and started swaggering to the back. Before you get to the restroom there is a public phone on the wall. A woman was using the phone and she had the phone cord stretched clear across the aisle leading to the bathroom blocking the aisle way to the bathroom. "Move, bitch!" Laurie told the woman. The woman gave Laurie a "forget you" look and kept on talking and blocking up the aisle way to the bathroom. Laurie quietly squeezed behind the woman and then took her foot and gave the woman a good swift kick in the butt, sending her flying head first into the brick wall, smacking her face against the bricks. Laurie then proceeded to the bathroom with a smug look on her face. When Laurie came out of the bathroom the woman was still on the phone, still had the cord stretched clear across the aisle way and was waiting for Laurie with a determined look on her face. Laurie never even glanced at the woman who was obviously gunning for her. Laurie just walked straight ahead and when she got to where the woman was standing Laurie just reached over and grabbed the cord at the base of the phone, gave it a good yank, the cord came loose from the telephone. Laurie then handed the disconnected phone cord to the startled phone caller. For some reason, out of the blue the proprietor of the Shamrock came up to the Wil Mar group and asked them to leave his establishment. Think there is any connection between the two??.

One time it was a very hot, humid day and Laurie was working in the unairconditioned kitchen. So she shows up for work in a pair of really short shorts with her butt sticking out of the bottom and just her bra on top. I am not talking about a halter or a sport's bra, I'm talking about a white lacy under your clothes type bra. About 9 am the whole nursing area starts screaming and going into an uproar. The Health Dept. is here! Oh my God, an aide screams, Laurie is downstairs cooking in a bra with her cheeks sticking out of her shorts! What are we going to do about it?

One of the aides runs downstairs, digs through the clean linen area of the kitchen and comes up with two clean aprons. She runs with the aprons and puts them on Laurie, one in the front and one in the back. She then stands back and looks – oh God, the bra is still sticking out, she says. But I guess it will have to do. I gotta get back upstairs to my patients.

Then there was the time when Mike Tibbets, an orderly, riled up Laurie in the kitchen and then enjoying himself, he walked up to the nurse's station and started bragging about how he got Laurie's goat. An aide ran down to the kitchen and told Laurie. Laurie came charging up the stairs, went to the nurse's station, heard him bragging, stood in front of him, pulled back her fist and knocked him ass over tea kettle. He went sprawling out on the nurse's station desk. Laurie then jumped on top of him, straddling his waist, and then started punching his lights out. She then grabbed his head and started banging his head against the desk. He was hollering bloody murder. Toni went flying to Werner, crying, Mr! Mr! Laurie is trying to kill Mike! Ya, it is kind of loud out there, come Toni sit down here with me. But Mr you gotta do something!! She is gonna kill him! Ya, you're right Toni, it is kind of loud out there. Shut the door, sit down her and have a cup of coffee with me. So Toni sat down and had coffee with Werner while Mike was learning to have more discretion about who to torment. Paybacks can be hell as they say.

One time Laurie was reminiscing about her past and she knocked our socks off with this revelation: she was married before. One night she and her spouse got into a big fight which just sort of escalated and before she knew it, Laurie picked up a butcher knife and stabbed her husband 6 times in the gut. He went to the hospital, was patched up, but died 6 weeks later from an infection. Laurie was charged with murder. When she went before the judge she told him that she did not kill him, that he killed himself. She told the judge that he was a diabetic and didn't take care of himself. That he died because the infection set in and couldn't be cured because of his high sugar levels. The judge took that under consideration and only gave her 5 years in jail.

A dangerous one was Bonnie Jensen, who worked there before I took over. One day she shows up in the kitchen with a loaded gun. The aides run and tell Mrs. Hefferon. She calmly goes down into the kitchen and asks Bonnie for the gun as though it was a piece of forbidden chewing gum. Bonnie gives it to her. Bonnie finds out that I am not happy with her performance. So one day I show up with a flat of flowers and start planting them for a total of about 20 minutes at the entrance to Wil Mar. While doing so Bonnie reached into my car and steals my car and house keys. You might have guessed by now that she was dead in the water as far as I was concerned.

One year after I took over Michelle Barg and Grace Spooner, another nurse who he thought was his friend, went against Werner and caused him over one year of grief and hard work before they all quit. But Werner was badly shaken by people whom he thought were his good friends became his worst enemies. Betty could not look him in the eye once he discovered she went against him after how good he had been to her all through the years.

One year after the employee fiasco we had nothing but problems from the neighbors and the city. We ended suing the city and that calmed everyone down for over a year. At the same time the neighbors and the city were giving Dave from the pig plant on Cass just north of us a real hassle too. So Werner felt like he and the 2 owners of the pig plant were compatriots in misery. So one

day Werner and I went down there and had a nice informal meeting with them about our enemies in common. Then later on we went to a fund raiser for the city and found we were placed in a corner at the same table as Dave from the pig plant. Dave did not feel like fighting, but he too was embroiled in a lawsuit with both Utica and Shelby Township. He wasn't too talkative about his problems with the city where on the other hand Werner was very voluble about his to anyone who would listen.

Werner used to call press conferences to promulgate his side of the broohaha. One time we poured a cement pad for the dumpster right across from Bourland's front door. As it was being poured the Bourlands were livid with rage. They called Fred Cross a city council member who used to be Werner's attorney in matters against the city and he came over and tried to stop Werner from pouring. Werner told Andre Vermuellen to keep pouring. Werner and Cross ran up and down Mc Clellan shouting at one another about the cement being poured. Then when Cross got no where with Werner he ran to city hall and poured over the ordinances for hours trying to find one that Werner violated. The police chief Rueben Ricard, who was telling us this story, then laughed and said they couldn't find one ordinance that had been violated so they couldn't do anything about the new cement pad. Then one week later Werner moved the dumpster over onto the pad making the Bourlands nearly have a stroke with rage. Gordon Bourland was a partially disable Vietnam veteran and like many Vietnam veterans he was a very very angry man. The city at first thought we were the problem but later found out that Gordon was the really big problem as were the homosexuals, Weimer and Jerkowski across the street from the nursing home. The only other trouble making neighbors were Tom and Mary Anne who were always putting in complaints against the nursing home. The city finally figured out that the nursing home was just conducting business as usual and that it was the neighbors who were causing all the trouble. The city tongue in cheek referred to these neighbors as "the golden triangle" as they lived in the shape of a triangle around us.

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Toni Camargo



Edna Smith



Sam Brys



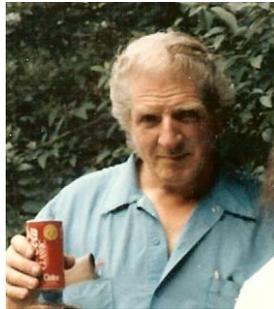
Betty Holdwick

After the traitors left Wil Mar Werner gathered a new set of "Stars" around him. The favorites were Toni, Edna and Sam. Sam let him down and he fired her but she later came back and apologized and Werner took her back into the fold. Betty and Marge were also his stars. These people fussed at him and he at them and sometimes they really had it out, but they were ever loyal to one another. Betty was a real backstabber to Werner but she was also a real good snitch too and let him know what in the world was going on.



Shirley Berlinger

Werner had a lot of respect for Shirley who had worked for Wil Mar for over 36 years. She was reserved and would not snitch but she was loyal to Werner and I when the chips were down and we really needed a friend.



Charles Steele

Charlie Steele was also loyal to Werner and was one of his best stars until the end. In the end Charlie took all Werner's tools out of Wil Mar every day in bags, and either he or John stole Werner's gold watch from his bedroom. Werner had that gold watch since he was in his 20's so he felt really bad about losing it. Charlie would never come back to a Wil Mar Christmas party as he was afraid of facing Werner. It used to be a joke with Werner that whenever he bought a load of Christmas trees for Wil Mar some would never get planted there and as a sudden Charlie had Christmas trees on his own property of the same kind and same height – an amazing coincidence, huh?

Werner believed in the "Open Door Policy" at Wil Mar and St. Anne's. Any employee, regardless of rank, could come to him with their concerns. His door was always open to them and he took their concerns seriously. He was most considerate of his aides. As he said they were the back bone of the facility and often knew best what was happening within the facility. The aides appreciated this and felt that a bad situation was not hopeless, they could get an immediate remedy by seeing Werner and discussing their concerns. And they did get immediate action from him. He used to pride himself on being "The Action Man". He never ignored their concerns or gave them a brush off. If they went to Werner they got relief. That used to exasperated the nurses and the Director of Nursing, but his intervention was often much needed as he brought some fairness to the situation on many an occasion.



Buch's Calico cat

One funny incident with Charlie. Charlie was almost like a butler to Werner. He did lots of things for Werner all through the years. The funniest was when Werner went to Gratiot Ave in the inner city of Detroit just out of downtown to Buch's to get used kitchen items. While there Werner admired the guy's calico cat and the guy said his son gave it to him and he didn't really want it, did Werner want to take the cat home. Werner said yes and off the cat went to Utica in our car. Werner never let the cat inside, so it ran around all day in the yard and surrounding environs. One night not too long after we brought the cat home it got into an awful fight with another cat in Werner's package box in the breezeway. You never heard such a wild cat fight in your life! Lots of creaming, hollering, and caterwauling. Lots of fur flew that night.

At night Werner would feed the cat cat food and milk in the kitchen of his house. He noted to me one day that the cat seemed to be drinking an awful lot of milk for some reason or other. Well, the next thing I knew I was in my house in New Baltimore on a fine Sunday afternoon when Werner calls me up in a royal twit. Da, ya, the cat just had a baby under my night stand. Da, ya, now she just had one on your comforter! Get over here, now! I need you here! I drove over on the double and found by that time the cat had had 4 kittens, one of which died under Werner's night stand. They were cute little balls of fur. The mother put them in Werner's bedroom closet and stayed there with him. The next morning Werner had Charlie come over as the placenta was stuck to the mother's feet and she couldn't get around. So Charlie cleaned up Mama cat and put the babies in a box in Werner's closet and fed the mother cat. About 10 days later Werner got sick. He came down with a bad cough which just kept getting worse. He coughed so hard he broke two of his ribs and now coughing was total agony. He was in real fear every time he needed to cough as the pain was unbearable. Instinct told me the cat might have something to do with his condition, so being it was warm as it was the end of May I put Mama and her babies outside in the garden where babies flourished. Good thing I did that because several years later we learned that pregnant cats can give people a form of Legionnaire's disease!

I went to the Detroit Library one fine Saturday morning to do genealogy and while I was there I got a frantic call from Werner saying he was at Troy Beaumont and to get over there pronto. Which I did, just in time to see Werner crawling over the edge of his gurney, flipping it up on end. He was standing up, saying he was going home. The medical staff told him he was too sick, he was staying. Get me out of here now! He bellowed at me. So I brought the car around. I got

him home and right into bed. Then I discovered much to my shock that he was delirious. Totally out of his senses. He was talking totally cockeyed. Was it the Demerol shot he got or was he that seriously ill? I called Dr. Timban, the house doctor at St. Anne's and asked him what he thought it was. His reply? In 4 hours you'll know. If he makes sense it was the Demerol, if not it is the illness. Thank heaven, 4 hours later he started making sense again. But before that a nurse at Beaumont called me and told me to bring him back there that his blood gases were out of whack and that his condition was serious. I told her I would try, but it was his decision. He never went. The doctor gave him antibiotics and he laid in bed for days, scared to death he'd have to cough.



Rudi Pitz



Dinora Pitz

On Sunday Rudi and Dinora came to visit him in his bed. They came through the garage and into the inner yard. Werner was very upset at their visit and told me very angrily and emphatically to get rid of them that he was in no condition for company. Beatrice was 5 months pregnant at the time. I had never met Rudi or Dinora before, so they were total strangers to me. I told them he was too sick for company. They were confused, wanted to say hello. Per Werner's instructions I stood between him and them. When Werner knew it was them he turned to the wall with his back to them and stayed that way all the while they were there. Now I kind of figure he didn't want me to meet Dinora for fear she would let the cat out of the bag. Werner gave her strict instructions that she was never to talk to me about them knowing each other previously. So I sent them away.

On Monday I called the dentist and told him I was in agony with a new filling he just did as it was too high and was pressing on the nerve when I ate. So the dentist told me to come right over. When Werner heard I was leaving his bedroom he went into a total panic. Who was going to help him cough? I told him I'd be back very shortly. Nope, that wasn't good enough. He then got on the phone and demanded that Charlie get over to his bedroom right now. When Charlie got over there I showed him how to stand over Werner and press down hard on his two broken ribs while he coughed as I had been doing. Charlie was petrified and demanded that I hurry right back. Which I did. In 15 minutes I was back in his bedroom. Charlie shot out of there like he came out of a canon, shouting over his shoulder that Werner had not coughed once while I was gone. We also wrapped Werner's ribs with an Ace bandage to keep them from moving when he coughed. In about a week Werner was about as good as new.

The kittens were flourishing. They had such fun playing with one another. When they were 6 weeks old the mother had disappeared and Werner was in earnest in finding homes for 2 of them, letting me keep the black and white one. The striped one wandered over to Mrs. Hefferon's blue house and she took it in and kept it along with her dog. The pure black one Werner gave to Dee & Owen in Ohio. I later heard that she slammed the car door on its neck, she heard a queeks,

then discovered the cat had died instantly. Werner gave all three cats names – mine was Moux, Dee's was Queeks, and Nancy's was Meeks. My cat disappeared shortly afterwards. I checked with the animal shelter in Shelby Township and in Mt Clemens with no success. I later kind of figured out that the most logical scenario was that Werner gave my cat away.

Werner's health was iffy even when I met him in 1976. He weighed 290 lbs, his blood pressure was 220/110, his sugar was creeping upwards, and his ankles were swollen and his feet were so swollen he couldn't get them into shoes anymore. His face was always beet red. He was constantly coughing a dry cough which worried him because his TB skin tests were always positive after he had been exposed to TB when he was in surgery in Med school in Jena and helped the doctors operate on bone TB. He always feared active TB but would never let them do a chest X-ray. I feared for my own health when I first met him, because if he had active TB my mom's family was half wiped out by TB as they were very susceptible to it. He told me he had cataracts in both eyes since age 40 and he has had a nodule in the posterior portion of his prostate for about 10 years, and that could be dangerous as that is the area that a nodule is most likely to be cancerous. He refused to let them biopsy it as he felt that a biopsy needle could pull the cells out of his prostate and spread them throughout his body via the bloodstream. Europeans feel that surgery or biopsy opens the cancer to the air, spreads it throughout the body and makes it grow like wild fire. So he never had it biopsied until Dr Oldford did it in Harper hospital when he did the cystoscopy on February 15th. It turned out to be benign. Werner never caught the flu. Year after year the whole nursing home, including me, would come down with it, but not him. The last year of his life he caught it for the first time and he had it at the time of his death. As he lay dead on his bedroom floor his nose was all stopped up.

Werner loved being boss and the nursing home was the perfect milieu for Werner to practice his father figure routine. Werner always said that no one could be non committal about Werner – they either loved him or they hated him and there was no in between. And that was a true statement. People who were full of their own importance hated Werner because he cut them down to size in no time. Humble people, on the other hand, recognized that Werner was the owner and the boss and gave him his due and they got along fine with him. The nursing home was Werner's little Kingdom and he felt very comfortable there. He hated the health dept because they were always questioning or threatening his supremacy. But Werner always won out in the end. Mrs. Shott, the Chief Licensing Officer downtown accepted Werner's dominance and she respected him, saying she knew where he was coming from as her father was German and operated just like Werner did.

And actually, when you think about it, the health dept let Werner get away with a lot. One time when Carlene had her annual inspection the health dept cited her for a bunch of physical violations and she protested, saying Wilhelm just had his annual inspection and his problems were worse than hers and he didn't get cited and she did. Why? She asked them. Because he's Wilhelm and you're not, was the reply.

Werner ran the nursing home kind of loose. When I took over Mrs Shott showed me Wil Mar's folder which was larger than an urban phone book and said that she hoped under my direction there wouldn't be so many serious violations. But as always under Werner and the Hirths before him we had our good days and our bad days. Werner pretty much continued to run the place after

I took over. He sat in the front office by the Mc Clellan door in my days. Earlier before my time he used to sit in the little office around the corner from the secretary's desk.

Werner was the traffic cop in that location. Nothing much bad got by him. If they didn't belong there he ordered them out in a very stern voice, and believe me they left in less than 4 minutes. If they wouldn't leave on their own steam he pushed them out with his belly, literally.

A really funny Mrs. Hefferon story needs retelling. Mrs. Hefferon loved to ease drop on Werner. She would go around the corner from her office and then she would flatten herself against the wall turn her head to one side and listen in. One day an aide came into Mr's. Office and when he started talking business to er, she silently pointed to around the corner and then put her hand to her ear, indicating that Mrs. Hefferon was listening in. Werner got a look of recognition on his face, then got up and stealthily walked toward the inner door and then really quickly swung around the corner and came face to face with Mrs. Hefferon. He then grabbed her ear with his one hand and dragged her into the office by her ear and told her she could hear better here.

Another time the house keeper Peggy wanted to know what was going on in the front office because the office door was shut. She said, I really want to know what's going on in there and I can't hear because the office door is shut. Well, listen through the key hole, Toni told her. So Peggy went up and put her ear right to the key hole and was listening nicely when all of a sudden the office door burst open, Werner appeared and he grabbed Peggy by the ear and moved her out of the way and dragged her with him from the office and half way through the day room before letting go of her ear and going out the day room door to his house. Peggy was saying "Oh, I'm so sorry Mr." as he was dragging her along by the ear.

I started out at Wil Mar auditing charts because they had so many chart violations with the health dept. Mrs. Hefferon did not like that one bit, me encroaching on her territory. But what the heck, she was not cleaning up her own chart mess and someone had to initiate the clean up process. She did clean up the charts once she got the paperwork from me. Werner made up two fine looking consultant sheets for me to use. One was for Social Work as I was a licensed social worker. The other one was for a medical records consultant.

My next job at Wil Mar was scarier. Werner brought in Barbara to audit the books as money was very short and he wanted to know where it was going. She found many Medicaid bills that were not submitted but she also found the a lot of cash was missing. Werner took Margaret Henderson down to Larry Brown's office and on the way back they stopped at St. Anne's where I was working in my little front office. I knew something was up because Margaret was as nervous as a cat on a hot tin roof. She literally danced all over the arm of the chair in the lobby she was so nervous. A week later Barbara found multiple irregularities and she got extremely nervous, telling me she suspected embezzlement. She told me what to look for, gave me a list of medicaid to rebill, showed me how to line up a bill in the typewriter, then she disappeared, never to be seen from again. She had indicated she did not want to be a witness in a court of law. I did an extensive investigation and found that in regard to patient pay amounts they were pocketing the amount patients paid in cash and were assigning checks from others to the embezzled accounts, matching patient pay amounts that were only a dollar or two off. I showed the results to Werner and he had me take them to Sgt Russ Reiterman in the Utica PD. Russ sat on it for weeks and

then did nothing. Later I retrieved the records I had spent so many hours painstakingly reconstructing. I later found out I could have taken this evidence to the prosecutor myself, but Werner never pushed it, so we let it drop. Werner was a kind hearted man and his heart was not into nailing his long term employees to the cross. Margaret's husband had polycythemia, a blood disorder and she needed the extra money. They moved to Arizona and later returned to Michigan where her husband died and is now buried in the Utica cemetery. Margaret has her tombstone beside him there.

Mrs. Hefferon worked for Werner as his Director of Nursing for about 14 years and left his employ in November after the financial irregularities came out. She heard I would be buying Wil Mar and she was upset about me coming in and usurping her place in Werner's affections, or so she thought. She took a job as a DON working for Mr. Mali. Mrs. Hefferon made a very good Don in the earlier days when nursing home direction was a simpler task. But when all the new complicated regulations came into being it was beyond her ability to handle. She made a wonderful mother figure to the aides and patients but she was not a paperwork pusher. Once paperwork was in higher priority with the health dept than patient care Mrs. Hefferon fell behind the younger newly trained RN's.

Mrs. Hefferon used to take the patients to the park for lunch, to the zoo, to the cider mill and used to have afternoon popcorn parties. But due to the new health dept regulations, no more. Now we do paperwork 24 hours a day, 365 days a week. And after the health dept looks at it, we file it away and do more paperwork for the next year.

Mrs. Hefferon used to have her hands full with the help. One time she was told Bonnie had a gun in the kitchen so Mrs. Hefferon went downstairs and told Bonnie to give her the gun, which she did. The next time Mrs. Hefferon went down and took away a knife. Mrs. Hefferon used to live in the Blue House right next door to the nursing home and on a number of occasions I used to see her sitting in the dayroom with her bathrobe on calming down the staff and restoring order late at night. Her son also liked living right next door too. He worked as an orderly. When they were short he would go in, punch in and then go home and go back to bed. Mrs. Hefferon's daughter was a very intelligent woman. She worked for a number of years in the kitchen as our Certified Dietary Manager. She was an excellent cook and kept very good records. She went to college evenings but was a perpetual student, never getting a degree in anything. She later went to work for Mali, doing his rebilling. She identified \$78,000 worth of unbilled Medicaid that was about to expire, in which case all this money would be lost. She redid all the bills, had all of them in her hands as she walked out the door of the nursing home and was on the way to the Post Office to send them to the State for payment. As she was walking out Mali was walking in and said to her, "Why are you leaving so early, you fat lazy bitch!" Nancy just smiled at him, walked over to the dumpster and dropped all \$78,000 worth of bills in the garbage. That remark cost Mali dearly.

Werner liked Mrs. Hefferon and defended her when the health dept started writing her up for record keeping. He rightly indicated that patient care would suffer if a record keeping nurse was brought in instead. There was some bad talk against Mrs. Hefferon by some of the aides who remarked that if Mrs. Hefferon didn't like a patient it seemed that that patient was not long for the world. A coincidence? Probably.

Mrs. Hefferon and her daughter Nancy were staunch supporters of Werner when he had all that health dept trouble in 1975 – 77. Werner told Mrs. Hefferon to get rid of the social service worker who was planning on removing the patients from Wil Mar and she did a splendid job of running that woman off. And when they had the health dept hearing in Lansing Mrs Hefferon and Nancy went with Werner and Nancy Jr was very instrumental in seeing that Werner covered all the salient points. She wrote notes and whispered strategies in his ear all day long. Werner was so pleased with them that he took them to Win Schulers in Rochester, a very fine restaurant, on the way home. They all ordered very fine dinners, but at the end of the dinner Nancy and Nancy Jr could have died when Werner picked up his plate and licked it clean! They begged him not to do it, but to no avail. He had paid for all the wonderful tasting gravy and he was going to see that he got to eat every drop of it.

That was the same trip to Lansing where Dykema Gossett hired a bus and took all the patient's relatives to Lansing to say what wonderful care the patients were receiving. This really helped Werner to win the case, even though it cost him \$10,000 for one weekend's worth of work.

Wil Mar had a lot of long term patients in those days, 99 percent of which were non alert. Mrs. Hefferon would not take a patient in unless they were non alert as she said the alert ones often caused a lot of trouble. One patient that Mrs. Hefferon took in was non alert coming in the door and then reverted to alertness later. Mrs. Lawrence was a real thorn in her side as she was always criticizing everything Mrs. Hefferon did. After I took over Werner and I made friends with her and then she became our staunch ally until her death many years later.

We received many patients from the State mental hospitals when they closed down and this was a real boon to us because these patients remained with us year and after year and were much easier for the most part to take care of than were patients who came from hospitals.

Mrs. Blomme used to sit in her upstairs room or the day room up there and knit baby hats all day just using her fingers, no knitting needles. And they were perfectly stitched. She went into a post partum psychosis and never regained sanity. She had tried to kill her children when this first happened and as a result her children were none to eager to visit her. In fact all the years I was at Wil Mar none of her children ever came to visit her, even once.

Gail Artero threw a blood clot after the birth of her 3rd child and sustained severe brain damage. She came to us from another nursing home. Her husband divorced her and raised their 3 children. When Gail's mother died none of us knew of the death until her sister came to visit Gail right after the funeral and 4 minutes after the visit began she came running into the front lobby as white as a ghost and badly shaken. When she went in to Gail, Gail looked at her, and having never had a lucid moment in the past 5 years, looked at her sister squarely and said in a very intelligent manner, "Mother's dead." There was no earthly way Gail could have known this as no one told her and no one but the immediate family knew and they had not conversed with her until this very moment.

Stanley was a micro cephalic who sat in our day room and "wrote" every day to amuse himself. Every time Werner would walk through the day room Stanley would look up at him and say, "Pollacka!".

Edith was a thyroid cretin and she was very much in love with Stanley. When Stanley would go out for a day with his sister Edith would cry the whole day until he got back, saying "my boy! Where's my boy!"

Kenneth was one of Werner's long time favorites. We called Kenny the lamp post as he would stand all day long at the entrance to the day room and stare out onto Mc Clellan St. All day long he would say, "there goes the milk man. There goes the postman, there goes the real minister!" Then one day after saying this usual litany he ended the sentence with "there's a dog on the roof!" After he said that for about 3 times, Werner ignoring the whole litany as usual as he concentrated on his work, Toni came by, looked out the door and said, "Hey Mister, look, there is a dog on the roof!" Werner with a quizzical look on his face, put his head up. Turned around and looked at the roof of the second house on Brownell and sure enough, there was a dog on the roof! A young Dalmatian. He would walk up the back stairway, squeeze under the rail and climb onto the roof and walk all over the roof for hours.

Wil Mar had good neighbors and bad neighbors, and believe you me, the bad neighbors were horrid! The worst of these was Borland, a Vietnam veteran with an itch in his soul. Everything upset that man. Werner and he were always at odds. Then in 1986 Jackie Noonan ran for Mayor against Fred Beck and she used Bourland's influence to win. So naturally when he told her to go against Wil Mar she did, but in a backhanded sneaky sort of way. She had Robert Weimar go against Beck and tell him if he did not go against Wil Mar they would turn him in to the Attorney General for irregularities in property acquisition and sale to the city. So Beck, to protect his own neck, went against Wil Mar and the lawsuits soon started flying. When Werner knew the city was after us he filed first as he said it looked better for us to be on top against them than vice versa.

Soon Fred Cross got into the act as he was running for District Court Judge against Judge Tom Mc Donnel so he went against us to get Bourland's vote. Then Fred Cross who used to be Werner's attorney of record, used information he had gathered as an attorney for Werner against us. So Werner sued him personally too, and also sued his good buddy Jim Prough who sat next to him on the City Council. When Fred Cross got his notice of suit he called Werner up right away that evening, and as Werner laid in bed listening to Fred rant and rave, Fred screamed at Werner that he was coming right over and was going to kill him. Some high class lawyer you got there, was my reply when I heard that.

In retaliation for Fred Cross going against us, we called up Judge Mc Donnel's camp and told them that we wanted to support him in his bid against Fred. So we had lunch with the Judge and his campaign manager at Piccirilis in Shelby Township. We put up Mc Donnel signs and wrote literature which we disseminated to the community supporting Judge Mc Donnel. Werner grabbed one of Cross's signs from downtown Utica as we walked the dog one evening and he took the sign and hung it upside down over my and Bear's 8 X 10 where it hung for about a year after Judge Mc Donnel won.

Another bad neighbor were the two queers living in the haunted looking house across Cass Ave from the nursing home. John Jurkowski was the biggest jerk, but his live in lover Robert Weimar had a very ugly disposition and it was my feeling that he could be dangerous. But it was

Jurkowski who pulled Werner's chain. One day Jurkowski came into the nursing home to discuss with Werner all his complaints about the nursing home. Werner listened to the guy, staring intently at the guy's throat the entire time. When John was done complaining and was looking at Werner waiting for his reply, Werner said to John, "You know, I could squeeze all the air out of your windpipe with just my two little fingers!" Jurkowski looked at him in total shock, then left the nursing home in utter confusion.

Edna knew how to rattle John's cage too. One day Edna was walking Bear around the nursing home on a leash when she spotted John walking on the blue house property about to take some pictures. So Edna hollered to Bear, "come on, let's get him!" and started running after John with Bear in the lead. John saw them tearing after him so he started running home. When John got to the middle of Cass Ave he turned around and hollered at Edna why didn't she mind her own business. And Edna replied that she was minding her own business and that is why she and Bear were chasing John. John then ran across the street and over the lawn towards his house. Edna and Bear ran into the middle of Cass Ave and just then Edna pulled back on the leash and told Bear "Whoa! Don't bite John! You might get AIDS!" Edna always has a way of getting in the last word as she certainly did in this case.

Edna had a cute 1987 story to tell. Werner and I went to the Sterling House Restaurant to eat during a very hard time in our Wil Mar life. We had many problems with bad employees and we sat and ate together as we discussed what we should do about our problems. At the end of the dinner the waitress went to where Edna and her friend Al were sitting and she said to Edna, with whom she was friendly, "Look! Watch this guy! Watch him! He's gonna lick his plate!" Edna looked up front and sitting about 2 booths back from the door were Werner and me. Werner was Edna's new boss, she having been at Wil Mar only about 3 months. When Edna looked up she saw Werner licking his plate with great gusto. Then Edna, whose temper is always close to the surface, blew up! She said to the waitress, "Does that man pay for his food?" The waitress said yes. "Does that man leave you a good tip?" She said yes. "Then what do you care how he eats his food? He can eat it with his feet if he wants to", bellowed Edna. On the way out of the restaurant Edna and Al got a nice surprise. Werner had paid their bill. When the waitress told Edna Werner had paid the bill Edna said to her, "See, I told you he was a nice boss." Werner licking his plate was kind of an embarrassment to me and I would ask him not to do it. He would just look at me with a 5 year old boy sort of look and then lick it anyway. Sometimes I would grab his sleeve to keep him from lifting his plate but my arm would just end up in the air along with his as the plate went to his mouth. One time I asked him, "Werner, we're going to Germany in a few weeks. Are you going to lick your plate in front of Aunt Henny?" Werner got a look of utter horror on his face at the thought of daring to do such a thing in Aunt Henny's presence. When one went to visit Aunt Henny one dressed up and one used his best manners.

Edna would holler and scream and carry on with Werner and me, but just let someone else go against us and Edna was right there. Hot to defend us. No one else could say a cross word against us. And Edna was my staunch defender against Werner when ever he would get mean to me. "Edna, Mr is at it again, he's picking on Sandy", they would run down to the kitchen and tell her. Up she'd come, lickety split as her legs would carry her and around the corner she'd fly to listen to what was going on. And in she'd fly is he was talking against me and she would tell him off big time. And she would get him the best of food and as much as he wanted when he

asked for it. The day after he died she brought a steak to work to cook for him, not knowing he had died. What a shock it was to her nervous system to learn he had died.

One time Werner fired Gary, a fellow on drugs and rather loud and boisterous at times. Gary came back later that day with a cast on his arm. Werner was sitting in the secretary's chair behind the desk when Gary came in and threatened to clobber Werner over the head with his cast. Again, the staff ran to the basement and told Edna what was going on. Lickety split, up comes Edna from the basement and gets behind Gary and holds a heavy yellow chair in her hands, ready to clobber Gary over the head with the chair if he tries to spring over the desk at Werner. After a while Gary left without hitting Werner and Edna went back to the kitchen, another crisis averted.

When Edna first applied for a job at Wil Mar in October, 1985 Werner and I talked it over and decided not to hire her at that time because we feared she was a friend of the bad employees. Her handwriting was very shaky, like that of an 84 year old woman and she talked in enigmatic riddles. So she reapplied in 11th of November, 1985 and we hired her at that time as the worst of the crisis was over so we felt safe to hire her at this point in time. Chris Stehle, one of the worst went right down to the kitchen and started harassing Edna. Edna harassed right back. At the end of a snowy day Edna went to put her boots on and couldn't find them anywhere. She was upstairs and downstairs hollering all over the place she couldn't find her boots. An hour later she found them – Chris had stuffed Edna's boots in the freezer! The boots might have been mighty cold, but on the other hand Edna was mighty hot! We still hear about this story.

Werner trusted Edna because she was very loyal to him and always had his best interests at heart. Werner gave her the keys to the kitchen and she was worthy of his trust. After hours Werner could call Edna and tell her that some idiot had left the stove on and could she go down there and shut it off? Edna would walk back to the nursing home at all hours to do his request.

When Edna joined us our second Bear, old Bear was almost 1 ½ years old. He was sickly all the days of his life and when Edna was new we had an awful time getting him to eat. He hated to eat. We would give him food, all kinds of food, and he wouldn't eat anything. He got down to 74 lbs and he looked awful. I was always taking him to the vet. They put him on 6 or 7 thyrolar .2mg per day and he did somewhat better. I had to end up mixing wet and dry dog food with table scraps and then I would have to run around the house chasing him with a messy handful of food and still he wouldn't eat. He would droop his head, his ears and his shoulders and slink off when he saw food. I would have to chase him around the house and then hand feed him while I was singing to him. And still he wouldn't finish. So when I found out Edna was a real dog lover Werner and I gave her the job of feeding him. She went nuts running after this finicky Shepherd, but in the end she got him to eat and he went from 74 lbs to 110. And Edna had the gray hairs to show for it, too.

When Edna first met Bear and was making friends with him she was playing with him and he accidentally scratched her arm with his tooth and drew blood. But Edna knew it was an accident so she and Bear were soon fast friends. One day Edna finished serving breakfast and came up to my porch office with a bowl of cereal as she was quite hungry. She sat down in my upholstered pink chair that Werner and I got at auction and started eating her cereal. Then she looked directly at me as we were talking together, then when she looked back down at her cereal Bear was eating

it out of her bowl, all the time looking directly at her to see if she was going to blow up or not. She laughed at Bear and we were so glad to see he was eating on his own for once. But that didn't last long.

The only other time Bear ate on his own without coaxing is when I went with him to Ann Kay's studio. We both sat down in the studio and Ann and I were talking when suddenly Bear got up and walked down the hall into her living area. We figured he was going to the bathroom to take a drink out of the toilet as he always did. He was gone longer than normal when all of a sudden Ann's timer went off and she went into the kitchen to take her next batch of cookies out of the oven. As she rounded the corner into the kitchen I heard a loud yell! Boy was she ever excited! Our Bear, who never eats anything, meat included, just was finishing up the last of the 36 cookies she had just taken out of the oven 10 minutes ago. He loved those cookies! She later baked a batch for him and he ate 18 of them real fast, with great love. He was interrupted by Edna, who screamed that you don't feed a dog all those cookies. But I told her oatmeal raisin was good for him.



Hari Mali & his son Roger

Bear was an impossible dog when it came to food. We took him to Hari's apartment one day. Hari had cooked each of us a \$9 per lb steak, and believe me, they were the finest steaks I had ever seen. Well he cooked one up for Bear too, and then cut it up into little pieces and laid it in front of him. The steam was coming upwards with a tantalizing aroma and the juices were running out of the steak. Hari was so anticipating watching Bear devour that steak.. Bear walked up to it, sniffed it, walked slowly away with his shoulders drooping and laid down on the other side of the room leaving the steak abandoned. Boy, did that ever astonish Hari!. But not Werner and me, we knew his eating habits. Hari really looked as though he really wanted to abuse that dog if Werner and I weren't around.

When Hari and Werner and I would go to the Bonanza Werner would always make Bear up a plate and take it to him in the car. Usually he would eat restaurant left overs, but not always. Werner also would bring old Bear an ice cream cone out of the Bonanza for Bear. He liked ice cream. When we would go to Mc Donalds with Bear, Werner would order an ice cream cone at the drive in window and when the help would reach the cone out the window Bear would stick his head out and start licking the cone before Werner or I could grab it. The staff used to think the cone was for a human and now the dog spoiled it. Once in awhile the help at Mc Donalds would give Bear a free hamburger that sat under the warmer too long.

Werner seriously considered buying a Mc Donald's restaurant as he thought they were a good business. He said it took at least 100K to buy a franchise but he thought you would soon get your capital infusion back. When we went to Frankfurt and Zurich they had Mc Donald's there.

The food there was more Germanic and much better than what we get in a typical Mc Donald's here. Werner said they were also building them in Russia at this time.



Peggy Allagreen

Peggy was hired on December 23, 1986 right after we won the election. She called in to see if Werner would hire her daughter. Werner told her to come in and talk to him, which she did. He talked her into taking the job. He told her it would only be from 10 to 2, 3 days a week. He then told her to start for a few hours on the 24th when she told him she could not come back till after January 2nd as she had planned a vacation for the next week. So she started on the 24th and then came to work after the New Year. She was hired as an activity Director and a Social Services Designee. Then Werner told her to work full time until the health dept came and went, which she did. She soon found herself working from 9 am to 4 p.m. 5 days per week. She was a good activity Director and also a very good social services designee. She was a very intelligent, social person and got along very well with the patients and staff. Werner liked her. He soon grew to trust her and gave her many managerial responsibilities over the years. She ran many errands for him. Her favorite story was when he asked her to get 2 Cadillac tires for him and mail them to him in Florida. She tells how large those tires were and how she had to roll them down an embankment to get them to the Post Office. What we all wouldn't do for Werner! She said.

Peggy played the piano and organ by ear and was quite good at it. When Werner was on the warpath, hollering and screaming at the hired help, the aides would run and get Peggy and say to her, "Quick get on the piano and start playing old German songs to calm Werner down. So she would play, her favorite to play over and over again between others was Eidelweiss. Invariably when he heard the beloved songs of his homeland he would calm down.



Peggy Allagreen



Werner & Toni Camargo

One time Peggy was playing Christmas songs for the patients and she and Toni were singing along when as a sudden the patient Kenny said, "Toni she's dead". Naw, she ain't dead, Toni said. "She is too dead", Kenny reaffirmed. Toni then looked at the female patient, and darned if she wasn't dead! Peggy, she really is dead, Toni told her. Peggy stopped playing and looked at the patient. She was dead. "Oh my God! My piano playing killed her!" Peggy cried out.

Uncle Kurt came to Werner and I from his hometown, Derenburg in East Germany when he knew he was dying. In spite of his heart being paper thin he continued to work on the midnight shift at Wil Mar. One day in March Uncle Kurt told Sandy that he did not feel well. But he insisted on going to work. In the middle of the night he told the nurse he felt really sick. Werner told the nurse to have Kurt lay down on the back couch and if he got worse to call an ambulance. He fell unconscious and was taken by ambulance to Beaumont hospital.



Werner with Kurt's body

He lingered for about 3 weeks and then passed away. Werner had Kurt's body removed to Santilli funeral home on 13 Mile Rd because his old friend was the funeral director there.



Werner delivering Kurt's eulogy

Many of Wil Mar's staff knew and loved Uncle Kurt and was very sad at his passing after having worked there for over 5 years. So Werner told the beloved old time workers that he would drive anyone who wanted to go to Kurt's wake. Many people wanted to attend so Werner drove over a dozen people to the wake. While there Werner delivered a very fine eulogy in honor of Kurt's life. Afterward Werner took all of his faithful workers to dinner



Bear in Cadillac in front of Woodlawn mausoleum

Werner and I drove from Santilli's funeral parlor to Woodlawn cemetery at 8 Mile and Woodward. We had Bear in Werner's Cadillac. Werner and I got out of the Cadillac leaving Bear behind sitting in the passenger's seat, looking out the window with concern on his face. Werner was very upset over leaving Bear behind in the car so when we ascended the steps



Werner with Santilli funeral director

Werner asked the funeral director if we could bring Bear into the funeral chapel. The funeral director asked the mausoleum and got permission to bring Bear in the chapel. This funeral director was very cordial and friendly but he was the craziest fellow I have ever met. He used to come over to St. Anne's on a regular basis to chat with Werner in his office, but that guy was off the wall.

Werner and I were very grateful to her when she played the organ in Woodlawn Mausoleum when Uncle Kurt was being entombed. Peggy could play the piano by ear at the nursing home and she pleased all of us for many hours playing our favorite songs. She always played Werner's favorites for him, Edelweiss being the one she most often played for him. So on Uncle Kurt's funeral day Werner asked Peggy to come along and play the organ for us, which she graciously agreed to do. As was told earlier, we were a very small family that day, only Werner, Peggy, Bear and I.



Werner & the Santelli funeral director

So the funeral director asked the cemetery if we could bring Bear in to the chapel of the mausoleum, which they graciously allowed us to do. You should have seen the look of astonishment on Werner's face when he saw Bear come around the corner. He couldn't believe he was seeing his beloved Bearsie dogsie coming.



Sandy, Werner & Bear at Woodlawn mausoleum

Bear realized this was very solemn occasion so he sat right down next to Werner and remained quiet and still. Then the minister preached a little then Peggy played Grandmother Rosa's favorite religious song, "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" on the organ. Werner insisted I sing along to the music, which I was reluctant to do, as I do not have the greatest singing voice nor a great ability to carry a tune properly. But nevertheless, in deference to Werner's wishes I sang it. In the middle of the song Bear very softly, very reverently joined in singing. The minister thought it was a ghost singing and he looked the entire chapel over, mostly at ceiling level, expecting to see an apparition. But it was just Bear. He looked to me for approval to continue singing, and when I did not acknowledge him, he stopped.



Werner & Bear in front of Kurt's crypt.

Peggy played a few more songs, then the service was over and she stood with Werner, Bear and I while Uncle Kurt was entombed in the crypt next to Byron and Mrs. Carse, Martha Klodman's former employers. Peggy was also with us the night before when Werner took us all to eat at a mom and pop restaurant on 13 Mile near the funeral home. The funeral director was Werner's crazy friend from way back who for years was at Eppen-Vandeweghe's Funeral parlor next to St. Anne's nursing home. He was a very pleasant fellow but crazy as a loon. He used to call Werner Bill, and I later learned that this fellow used to work for Werner in the apartment buildings on Detroit's west side when Werner was new to this area. At that time Werner was trying to Anglicize himself to better fit in, and so tried using the name Bill, which he later discarded in favor

of Verne. Anyway, Werner took whoever of the old timers from Wil Mar who wanted to go to the funeral parlor and we had a little service for Uncle Kurt there with Werner giving the eulogy. Afterwards he took us all to eat. We all had nice dinners and a very pleasant social evening. Then at the end of the dinner Werner picked up his silverware, twirled it around in his hand and said, hmm, not bad silverware. Wil Mar is short on silverware. Unbeknownst to Werner the girls all came to Peggy with their silverware the next day. Seems that everyone took it to mean Werner wanted that silverware, so all the girls stuck their place settings in their purses and the next day one by one went to Peggy's little side office and pulled out the silver and gave it to her to take to the kitchen!

Peggy was also present for a very sad chapter in Wil Mar's history. While Werner and I were in Sebring she called him up and told him that \$2000 in cash had been stolen from the front office. Werner told her to call the police, which she did. The police interrogated everyone and ended up arresting half of Wil Mar's staff for unrelated offenses. Peggy said that Sue stole the money, but it was the staff's feeling that it was much more likely to be George that took the money. Nothing was ever proven, one way or the other, but a majority of the money was repaid gradually.

Then not too long before Werner died he got another call from Peggy when he was in Sebring. Wil Mar was on fire! Peggy's office was burning. The fire department came and extinguished the fire in Peggy's large office, but they made a big mess of it, and the water went into the kitchen and was flowing down from the ceiling. Werner flew home right away to meet with the Health Department and minimize the damage. When he heard Wil Mar was on fire he called me to his office and told me that was the end of Wil Mar. It was a very hard time, but fortunately after many months of needless grief from the Health Department, Wil Mar was back on track. The fire was started by Peggy when she emptied out Alice Shovlin's purse and dumped all the trash in her trash can and did not see that there was a smoldering cigarette in the purse. The cigarette caught the waste paper basket on fire and then the flames leaped up and got the curtains on fire. The biggest loss was the original video of Werner at his last Christmas party at Wil Mar. We also lost his garage door opener in my office as the water ruined it.

After that fire Werner continually referred to Peggy's office as the "pig sty". Peggy was deeply hurt and moved into the small office and remained there, refusing to go back into the office that burned. Werner was so upset with Peggy causing the fire that he reduced her salary from \$8 to \$6 effective immediately. Peggy left the office and cried a great deal but remained working for us.

Werner demanded I come home the next day. Judy Just, the Sebring secretary had to pick her mom up at the Tampa airport that day so she dropped me and Bear off at the Tampa airport and we flew home at 5 p.m.. Bear never flew before and he was a nervous wreck. I bought him a full size cage and we assembled it right there by the baggage area, but then Bear refused to get in it. I finally coaxed him into it by telling him he had to get in it so he could go see Barney, his best dog friend in the whole world. By repeatedly telling him he was to go see Barney he finally acquiesced to get into that cage. We were met at the other end by Werner. Werner immediately went to Bear's cage and wanted to get him out of there right away. I told Werner to wait a minute until I could get my luggage off the revolving belt then I would bring Bear to the car as Werner was getting weak from the kidney failure and I was afraid he did not have sufficient strength to handle Bear by himself. But Werner knew better and he grabbed Bear's leash and he

took off around the corner and out the door with the dog. That is as far as he got for as soon as he turned the corner he slipped on the wet pavement and down he went, real hard. He had a real fat wallet in this front pocket which struck his upper thigh real hard and Werner thought he might have broken his leg it hurt so bad. A K-9 policeman came to Werner's aid to help pick him off the pavement, and while he was helping Werner the canine dog and Bear got into it. Edna jumped out of the van and the policeman got his dog under control and in the midst of all that confusion they managed to get Werner into the front passenger seat. I was unaware of all that confusion and by the time I got my luggage and got out to the car the crisis was over. Werner had a huge bruise on his leg for several weeks from the wallet.

The next 6 weeks was nothing but unbearable grief from the health department. They were being utterly asinine about the whole situation, but there was nothing we could do about it, just live through it as best we could. They made us cater in food for weeks and weeks, claiming our kitchen was not sanitary due to the water. Bull! We were clean within 5 days but they just wanted to flex their muscle and there was nothing we could do about it. They also restricted admissions and we were down to 32 patients by the time they lifted their ban. We were on the MIP system of payment so by the time they audited us 6 months later we were grossly overpaid. They then paid us half payments for the next 6 months. Ireta miraculously got us over that period by rationing out the bill payment process and by not buying anything we did not absolutely need. Then we face a new crisis with the annual audit, saying that we were below the 80th percentile in patient census so thousands of dollars were going to be disallowed. I did some very creative but honest and above board bookwork, typed it up real nice and professional like and it passed audit and we were allowed our full expenses as I got the census up to the allowable level just by the skin of my teeth. Werner was very proud of me for my creativeness in bringing us up to the required level of census. Werner had always said that my true worth was in my handling of projects, that all my work was first rate and accurate to the nth degree but that he was much better in management planning than I was. But I reminded him that I had to leave all of management up to him because if I tried to do anything my way, he would simply undo it and do it his way. Which was right in my estimation as he was a brilliant man and no one was better at management and planning than he was, even though his way was to make a 3 ring circus out of almost everything he did. Beatrice used to call it a 20th Century Fox production.

The next annual survey was a real horror for me. I had just had surgery for removal of cancer and had over 20 metal clips in my skin and was in bad pain when in they walked. They demanded I go with them and help set up the 6 foot table and chairs in the library. I thought about that for 1 minute, then told them outright that I was not physically able to walk that far, let alone set up equipment as I just had surgery. They accepted that and set up things for themselves with some help from my staff. They then demanded that we get the rips in the screens repaired as the flies were coming in. We had no one to go so I started to go to my tan van, figuring that somehow I could drive with one hand. The health department got real upset at the thought of me driving in my condition and told me the screens could wait for the maintenance man to drive them down.

There was a grand finale to this fire fiasco which no one will soon forget, least of all the fire marshal, Detective Sergeant .Stayer. All through the years we have had newspaper men and others taking pictures of Wil Mar whenever they were up to causing more trouble, so Werner told all the aides that they were to notify him immediately if they saw anyone taking pictures of Wil

Mar. So one bright sunny summer day Toni was up in the break room having lunch when she saw some guy get out of his car with a camera in his hand and start pointing it at our building. So she ran full speed ahead down the ramp and told Werner that there was a guy outside on Mc Clellan taking pictures of our building. Werner turned around, saw a guy looking through his view finder, and that was enough for Werner. He popped out of his chair in the front office, ripped open the door and barreled out of the nursing home and across the street as fast as his legs would carry him. I ran after Werner to restrain him, but he was going so fast and had enough of a head start on me that I was unable to catch up with him. So as I was running I helplessly watched as Werner walked behind the guy with the camera, ripped it out of his hands, tore the back of the camera wide open, pulled out the roll of film, then grabbed the end of the film and exposed the whole roll by pulling it out of the canister, then put the strap of the camera over his shoulder as the wide open camera bounced wildly against Werner's body as he charged back into the nursing home. Werner then sat in the secretary's desk with the open camera sitting on the end of the desk as Werner smirked at the fellow in the suit who came into the nursing home right behind Werner. Werner had an "I got you" smirk on his face as he watched the fellow come into the nursing home and face him. What did this fellow have to say? I'M DETECTIVE SERGEANT STAYER OF THE MICHIGAN STATE POLICE FIRE MARSHALL'S OFFICE AND I COULD HAVE YOU ARRESTED FOR WHAT YOU JUST DID!!! OOPS! We all thought simultaneously. What a revolting development! What did Werner have to say? Werner hunched his shoulders way over, in a bent over position, had a real humble and humiliated look on his face and said to the Sgt. In a meek and humble voice, "I feel like a wet poodle!" As the Sgt. went through Wil Mar looking the place over Werner told him 3 more times he was sorry, he did not realize that he was the Fire Marshal and that he did indeed feel like a wet poodle. When the Fire Marshall was ready to exit the building Werner had a hand written note of apology ready for him and he really groveled in that note, apologizing all over the place, and he signed it "a wet poodle". Sgt. Stayer now tells that story to all his trainees every time he comes into the nursing home, and he loves it even more with each retelling.

But Werner ended up having the last laugh. Shortly after Werner's death Sgt. Stayer came through the nursing home for a quick inspection of the fire pull stations. Peggy said she would call the local fire dept and tell them that they might pull a station. We don't need to call them, Stayer asserted. 2 more times Peggy tried to tell him it was a good idea to call them just in case. No need to, Stayer asserted again in a strong tone of voice. So off they went, Stayer looking at each pull station. When he gets all the way upstairs outside of room 1, the furthest away one could possibly be from a phone, he sees a very thin hair sticking out of the pull station's cardboard washer. What's this, he said and pulled out the fine hair. Yup, you guessed it --- Ding a ling a ling ... bringgg! Went the fire alarm. Not only in Wil Mar but also in the fire station. And Peggy was not available right by the phone to cancel the alarm as she was also upstairs outside room 1 with the Sgt.. So they all ran downstairs all the way through the 1st floor to the phone but by that time standing outside of Wil Mar was 2 police cars, 3 fire trucks and 2 ambulances, with men flying into the home looking for the non existent blaze. You're taking the rap for this one, Peggy told Stayer. You go out there and face all those guys and tell them what happened. We all figured it was a friendly visit from Mr. Wilhelm who returned to impress upon Stayer that paybacks are hell.



Cindy Jones

Cindy Jones was also a long time Wil Mar employee. She came in about 1987 and was with us until long after Werner's death. Cindy was a day nurse, taking care of patients. Like all of us she would occasionally goof up and Werner would call her in and tell her how he wanted things to run. He would call Cindy at those times his "floor board nurse". She got a kick out of that moniker. She liked Werner and was good to him, although at times he did exasperate her, but she was always kind and cheerful even when she wanted in her heart to clobber him.



Wil Mar staff, Shirley, Betty, Marge & Sandy

When a nurse wasn't of the right sort for Wil Mar Werner would soon run them out on a rail, with lots of shouting and name calling in the process. If you had no humility and tried to grow over Werner's head you certainly didn't last very long. Werner would chop those sort up and quickly send them on their way. But it was only the management staff that Werner would have to throw out. The aides took care of the bad new aides on their own. When a bad new aide would throw the whole place in a turmoil and would not straighten up when the older aides tried to get them to do the work properly you would soon hear lots of shouting and hollering, then you would see the new aide running for her life out the Mc Clellan door with a whole posse of old aides chasing after her threatening her with stuff worse than death. Werner would merely look up in a disinterested sort of way as all the commotion flew past his desk.

We had many Directors of Nursing over the years as the job was difficult and very few nurses were able to handle the job properly. Mrs. Hefferon left the November before I took over. When I took over I hired Jackie, a thin blond nurse who had been working in a major hospital in Detroit. I should have known better than to hire her as she was burned out from the last job, but I was captivated by the fact that she had lived in Lion's Head for 2 years, and besides, no one better had applied for the job. She turned sour in less than 4 months and she was dangerous going out of the door. We then hired Diane. A nurse without much experience in anything, but very intelligent. She was the tall willowy type and very impressed with herself. That didn't go too

well with Werner and they were always butting heads. She lasted a year and was not approved by the health dept as she did not have year geriatric experience so we got a violation on the annual survey for that reason. Then we had a friendly RN, Jana, who lived in Romeo. I loved her personality and we got along great but she was incompetent to do most if not all of her duties. I feel there was some liquor involved. Werner got along really good with her as she was an outgoing friendly type and buttered Werner up to no end and always did things the way he told her to. We hated to see her go but the health dept. would have crucified us if they saw her work. Werner remained friends with her years after she left and kept in touch by phone. He even lent her his trawling motor for fishing which she never returned.

After that we had Mrs. Barbara Powell, an intelligent, elegant woman who really knew what she was doing. She lasted one year and saw us through the employee fiasco, but I always wondered if she was hired off the street or if someone from the enemy planted her there. To this day I am uncertain of that. She quit right after things calmed down, also making me suspicious. She said she quit because she discovered she had cervical cancer and her and her husband decided to enjoy some retirement before something awful might happen. She and Werner were always in disagreement as Werner wanted to be boss and hold endless management meetings and Mrs. Powell felt that they were a waste of time as she wanted to get some work done.

Then we had a 45 year old blue eyed blonde, Sally, who right away had snide things to say about Werner and at a seminar shortly after she was hired was ashamed to admit she was working at the nursing home. I knew that would never work and she was soon gone.



Werner, the Sherman tank

The seminar made me roar with laughter as it was about different personality types and the first type, the Sherman tank type of personality fit Werner to a tee. He's the sort of guy who does everything his way and steam rolls over everyone. He is the King who sits on his throne and does things his way, right or wrong.

The real disaster as a Director of Nursing was a woman in her 20's named Jackie. She was always in a turmoil and always blamed it on the nursing home and not on her total inability to manage things. She was always up in arms, twisting in circles and carrying on. Boy, did she and Werner ever get into it, almost daily. But our hands were tied because whenever we would put in an ad to replace her no one would answer. So we were stuck with her. She fell for our maintenance man and soon they were sneaking off in the middle of the day to make love. Then she would tell her husband she was coming into the nursing home after hours and sneak around

town with the maintenance man instead. Finally in a big blow up between Werner and her she quit and took a job at another nursing home. That job didn't last long as they found her sleeping on the job and fired her. Then a big tragedy occurred. When she got fired there was a big blow up between her husband and her over her loss of her job and no doubt he had a good idea about her sexual peccadilloes as well. He then went to work in a big roil and on the way home was still very upset. As a result he got into a serious accident on the way home and rolled over his truck several times. They called Jackie as he was pinned in the truck and she got to the scene of the accident and watched as they finally got him out and took him to the hospital. The end result was that he was permanently paralyzed from the waist down. She stayed with him for about 2 years as they were both suing, he for his injuries and she because she wanted another child and now they couldn't have one. Later after the settlement we heard third hand that she divorced him. Later on she again applied for the Director's job, but we had enough the first time around.

Then for about a year we had Sue Hughes, a young, tall RN. She handled the job quite well although she was a bit young for the position. She left after about a year as the Michigan Psychiatric Institute offered her an easier job for about the same pay. When she heard several years later that Peggy had said she stole the \$2000 she was really upset, saying she never took that money. Later we heard that Sue claimed to have a severe disability due to liver damage and was collecting social security disability.

Mrs. Richards was the biggest uproar Wil Mar ever had, like Sister Mary Conrad at St. Anne's when Werner first took over. Mrs. Richards appeared to be very friendly, open honest, caring. She was the sister of Dr. Murray Deighton, a well respected physician who worked out of Providence Hospital in Southfield. We finally got a good DON we thought. She was real friendly to Werner and me, but especially to Werner. She was always smiling at him and buttering him up. We really liked her. But we were gone a great deal of the time to Sun N Lake Towers so we had no idea what she was up to. One by one the staff was calling us up down there and carrying on about how badly they were being treated by Mrs. Richards. We couldn't believe it and Werner discounted what he was being told as he trusted his own judgement. He really liked Mrs. Richards as a person. When we got back to Wil Mar the staff all jumped on him about what a witch, and a two faced one at that, Mrs. Richards was. It took Werner and I a long time to believe what we were being told. One day Toni had Werner all lathered up and was shaving him when suddenly he said something complimentary about Mrs. Richards. Toni was so enraged that she deliberately took her razor and sliced him sideways across his neck with it. OW! Werner screamed as he was dripping blood through the shaving cream. What did you do that for, Toni! Because you talked nice about that old witch. And if you say anything more nice about her, I'll cut you again! Then because she was so mad at Werner Toni walked away leaving shaving cream all over half of his face with blood oozing into the white shaving cream. Werner asked for a paper towel and wiped the blood stained shaving cream off his face.



Toni Camargo



Sam Brys

One day Werner noticed his hair was too long and he didn't feel so good anymore and he didn't feel like driving all the way to Detroit to get a cheap haircut from the barber college, and perish the thought that he would pay full price at a local barber, so he asked Toni to cut his hair. Sam had cut his hair a number of times in the past year and she did a pretty good job, so now that Sam moved away he figured Toni could take over where Sam left off. Toni was hysterical; Mr., I can't cut your hair! I never cut hair before! Aw, come on Toni, you can do it! Werner pleaded. Aw, no, Mr.! Toni replied. Get some scissors and cut! Werner said, I'm sure you can do an okay job! So Toni, dying a thousand deaths, cut Werner's hair. He then came across to the apartment and told me with a very pleased sounding voice, that Toni had cut his hair. He said that as he was walking by me heading for the bathroom. When I saw the back of his hair I could have died! There was 3 big holes, right to the scalp where he had moved and she had scalped him! Boy, I hope he never looks at the back of his head over the next 6 weeks, I thought to myself. And he didn't. He was pleased as punch over his free haircut. But every time Toni saw the back of his head she got a squiggly feeling in the pit of her stomach.

About 6 weeks later Werner said to Toni, hey Toni, my hair is getting kind of long. How about giving me another haircut? OH, NO!!! Oh, please Mr., I can't do that. I don't know how, please have someone else do it! No, I need a haircut and you did just fine last time, Werner replied. Just at that moment I called up Werner asking him a question about the books I was working on. Werner mentioned that Toni was starting to cut his hair just now. I faced the computer and typed in what Werner and I had just discussed, then the full import of what he had just said hit me. Toni was about to butcher up his head again. How many holes would he have this time around? I'm so darned busy, I need to get this work done, I've never given a haircut to someone in my entire life, but I feel that even if I tried I wouldn't do as bad as what Toni did. So I left my computer running and hoofed it double time over to the nursing home and caught a glimpse of Toni with scissors in her hand. Here, Toni. Let me try to cut his hair, I said. Oh, good! Toni exclaimed, and in a split second she was out of there and around the corner out of sight. Werner thought about this change of barbers and decided that it mattered not to him who did it, just so it was free. I spent one whole hour cutting his hair as I didn't want to butcher it. I cut a little off at a time, cutting it in 3 tiers before I felt it was the right length. It looked pretty good when I was done, no holes or anything, but I was not completely satisfied with his beautiful lock that hung over his forehead. It didn't have just the right look to it.



Werner Wilhelm with the bad haircut

I cut his hair once more before he died, the afternoon before our wedding. We went to church together in our activity room and on the way out I noticed that his hair was shaggy, so I asked him to sit in the barber chair, even though he looked really weary and I figured he was longing for his bed. But he agreed to get a haircut and sat in the barber chair. I found the hairdresser's scissors and her comb and with a wing and a prayer, I began. Again I cut it in layers so if I goofed anywhere along the way I still had some hair to even it up. Werner soon fell asleep. I found I was cutting his head as it bent forward in sleep, but I had to be watchful as every now and again he would pop his head up and I would end up scalping him or poking him in the back of the head with my scissors. But it turned out looking pretty normal, as you can see when you look at his wedding pictures. But he said a rather mean thing to me in the middle of my cutting his hair. He said, You're going to not do a real good job on my hair today so that tomorrow you will look better than me. That made me feel real sad that he would think that way.

Sam was another really nice aide at Wil Mar. Sammy liked Werner a lot too. She would fawn over him and hug him and treat him nice. They once had a major falling out and she left Wil Mar. Later she came back and asked Werner for her job back, which he gave her. You always heard happy sounds when Sam and Toni were working. They made the day shift a happy place to be. They were both good workers and things hummed when they were around.

Sam had a boy and a girl from a previous marriage which she would bring to work with her when she had no one to sit with them. The girl did a really good job of making beds with her mother. The girl, about 6 or 7 years old, was a very cute, dainty little blue eyed blonde. She was a joy to have around. Sam got married again and toward the end of her stay at Wil Mar she and her new husband decided they wanted a child of their own. Sam's tubes were tied so she came to Werner and asked him for \$2000 loan so she could get her tubes untied by Dr. Ayres at University of Michigan. Werner would not give her the money outright but he said he would co sign for a loan for her at Comerica bank. Werner got the loan papers for her and she returned them to Werner in a few days. The bank then told Werner he could fill out a separate loan application so Sam would not know his financial business. But Werner never had to co sign because Sam borrowed the money from Toni's brother. She got her tubes untied and shortly thereafter got pregnant with their first son. Then Sam and her husband moved up north and she got pregnant again. But she

never paid Toni's brother one penny of the money he had loaned her and her husband so there was always very strained relations between Toni and Sam after that.

Two very sad stories about Sam emerged in later years. First of all Sam had a very bad car accident with her two younger sons in the car and they were both really injured but survived. Then the most tragic tale of all emerged a few years later. Her beautiful little blue eyed blonde daughter, now 13 years old, had just committed suicide.

Marge on the afternoon shift was also one of Werner's favorites. It was due to us that she was hired and remained as an aide at Wil mar. Marge went through nurse's aide training at the local high school but got only a provisional certification as she did not satisfactorily complete all aspects of the training. But we hired her and kept her in spite of many older aides complaining continually about how slow she was. Werner had some concerns because she could not complete her work in 8 hours and we did not want her working overtime although she willingly wanted to do so without extra pay to keep her job. We felt, and rightly so it turned out, that Marge would be a very loyal aide to us. She was indeed loyal and was very fond and supportive of Mr. All her days with him. She loved him and it showed. He was very fond of her also and she was considered one of his stars and whenever we gave out bonuses we made sure that she was in the elite group that got more money. She still is on the slow side but she is very loyal and comes to work regularly, something the younger aides fail to do. Marge is psychic and many of her predictions and sightings come true. She sees Werner in the nursing home and at her home often.

Wendy was a real funny little kid we hired in the kitchen. I desperately needed help when we had all that employee trouble in 1985 and when all else failed I drove through the local trailer park on Utica Rd asking the kids who were playing in the street if they would like a job in our kitchen. Wendy and Rae Lynn said yes. Rae Lynn was 16 but Wendy was only 14, but that was old enough to work in the kitchen. So she got her working papers and she started off as a kitchen aide. I often worked with her when we were short on help. She would often get exasperated and cry out that she was only 14 and too young to handle all the problems on this job. But she was a good worker. Werner liked Wendy. She was smart, and had a lot of spunk. And she loved Werner. One day Wendy came in with a neck brace on. I asked her what happened. She said she woke up at 4 am hungry, so she went cruising around town to get something to eat and ended up having an accident and injuring her neck. 14 years old cruising around at 4 am for something to eat? When I was hungry at 14 years old, I would raid the fridge. Times do have a way of changing. Years later Wendy came by and showed me her new baby. I was happy for her as she had 2 deformed kidneys that didn't function too well so it was a real blessing that she was able to have a child without destroying what was left of her kidney function. Much later I also met Rae Lynne coming out of the nursing home. Rae Lynne was absolutely radiant with joy as she had just gotten married to a fellow she really loved and who she said treated her very well. I was so glad to see the happiness of those two young kids. They were very deserving of such happiness.

When I first started work at Wil Mar we had Millie for an activity's director. She was a real sweet decent woman of about 50. She made a real good activity director. When all that trouble with the other workers broke out she got too nervous and quit. What a shame to lose her. A very sad thing happened to her right after she left us. She felt her husband was really mean to her and

She always felt bad about the way he treated her. Then one day we heard that her daughter was getting married in December. So on December 1st she and her dad were driving into Capac to have a fitting on her wedding gown. The father was driving. He hit a patch of ice on the highway and lost control of the car and hit a bridge. He was wearing a seat belt but the impact was so great that it burst his heart open. The daughter was not wearing a seat belt and was thrown. She was in a coma for weeks on end and when she did regain consciousness she had to be retrained to walk, to feed and dress herself, etc. The fiancé still wanted to marry her, but the mother said no, it would not be right to burden himself with a mentally and physically impaired wife.

We also had another real nice activity director, Grace. She was close to 60 and had a real kind heart. She knew all her residents and was real kind to them. She also loved Werner and was very kind and loyal to him. Grace had severe diarrhea from being in an undeveloped area when her husband was in service and picking up some sort of parasite. She had to leave us in the spring of 1986 because she had been hospitalized in severe distress and was now going on a disability retirement. We hated to see her leave. Grace had a tragic life also. She had many children and grandchildren and had suffered the death of several of them in the past. She also had a retarded daughter that worried her as to what would happen to her when Grace died. One day there was a phone call for Grace in my office and Grace then went to pieces and said she had to leave immediately. Her 8 her old granddaughter had missed her bus home. The 8 year olds brother had told the bus driver not to take off yet, that his sister was not on board. But the driver did not listen, he just took off. When the boy got home he told his mother the sister had missed the bus. The mother of the girl and the brother got in the car and headed for the school. As they were waiting to cross the main street they saw a sight they would never forget. Laying in the street. All broken up and very dead, lay the little 8 year old. She had tried to walk home by herself and was struck down by a car as she tried to cross the main street.

The next activity director was named Kelly and she was a horse of a different color. She was young and pretty and had a good figure and she was ready for whatever the world had to offer. It offered her something in the way of romance, with John our Administrator in training under Werner. Werner was not impressed with Kelly, but he pretty much ignored her. Kelly got the hots for John and soon they were seen going into the porch office for hours at a time together. Next thing we heard Kelly had an abortion. She looked real peaked and soon quit. It was a relief for Werner and me because we were afraid she would sue us for sexual harassment.

John was Mrs. Hefferon's son. He wasn't nearly as intelligent as his sister Nancy but he had a good heart and would do whatever Werner would tell him to do. He ran many errands for Werner saving Werner from hours and hours in the car, running around town getting things for the nursing home. Werner used to do all his own running, fetching things the nursing home needed. This would wear Werner right out, and it became an even bigger strain for him the older he got. So he was grateful to delegate most of the running to John. John was grateful for the opportunity to be an administrator. John also learned how to strip and wax the nursing home floors and he would stay up all night cleaning the hallways. Come morning the halls would look good and John would be heading to bed. But one problem - John never got the edges so you would have a thin ribbon of dirty edges when he got through.

John and Charlie never got along too well. Charlie had a very low opinion of John's abilities, especially since Charlie watched John grow up next door in the blue house. When Werner started bragging up John and putting down Charlie, and then putting Charlie under John's supervision, that was the end for Charlie. He packed up all of our tools over the course of a week and then one day told Werner that was his last day and he wanted his paycheck right away. That was a very sad day for us. Charlie had worked for Wil Mar for over 10 years and was very much a part of the place. After Charlie and John left Werner was shocked to discover his gold watch, that he had since the 50s was missing. It was on the shelf next to his bed so he knew that either Charlie or John had to have stolen it as they were the only ones in his apartment. That was a very sad thought. Werner was once again betrayed by someone who claimed to love him and whom he trusted enough to allow in his house.

Uncle Kurt used to come to us every November and stay till April. This one year he called Werner from Derenburg and asked if there was anything he could bring with him. (It is traditional for Germans to bring gifts to people they visit.) Werner thought about that for a minute and said ya, bring me seat cushion covers for Wil Mar's couches. He said he would call Kurt back with the dimensions. Calling a person back in the DDR days of East Germany was an exercise in futility. It was nigh on impossible to get a call through even though almost no one in East Germany had a phone in those days. Your best bet of getting through was about 4 am our time. The communists monitored every phone call so if they didn't have a person ready to listen in the call didn't get through. Werner used to call the operator in East Germany to try to get the call through in that way. One time Werner was in a phone booth in the train station in Naumburg and he tried to put through a call to the Seibickes in Mertendorf. He didn't know the Forwarts Nummer (area code) so he called the operator and asked her what the Forwarts Nummer is for Mertendorf. She told him she had no idea. He asked who would know. She said the people who he is trying to call would know. He said he can't call them without the Forwarts Nummer. She said that's right. He asked who else he could call to get the Nummer. She said no one. (Werner, don't you know that the Commies don't want you calling around in their country!?).

Werner was always frustrated at the poor financial condition of Wil Mar year after year since he lost that \$100,000 under Margaret and also lost significant reimbursement when he did not put in that extra nurse on the afternoon shift in the allowable time frame. He also lost an opportunity to have a one time upgrade in the reimbursement through other new rules that the health department promulgated and allowed money for if you upgraded which Werner did not until the Health Dept forced him to. Werner's style of management would have made lots of money under the old fixed rate per patient per day system, but in the prospective reimbursement system what you spent is what you got 3 years later so with Werner not spending like a drunken sailor every 3 years when Wil Mar was rebased we got further and further below the 80th percentile (the maximum rate at which the State would allow you full reimbursement for all your expenses). We ended up being the second lowest paid nursing home out of the 440 nursing homes in the State of Michigan. Werner was somehow proud of this fact and trumpeted this information every chance he got.

But Werner was always asking Steve Feldman in the later years if he should close Wil Mar as he had to put back his whole salary into Wil Mar every year as Wil Mar was always losing tons of money. We also took out a \$100,000 working capital loan and that too got gobbled up, forcing Werner to put in cash from his own pocket. Werner dearly loved his own home and would much

rather close the nursing home than sell and risk losing his home that he had lived in since 1971. Mali's wife tried to buy Wil Mar for her son Bradley so he could play around working on his car and boat in the back yard while some one else ran the nursing home for him. But they wanted the blue house immediately and Werner's house after 5 years, so that deal fell flat immediately. (Plus the fact that Carleen said she had cancer of the ovaries which had spread to her intestines and liver so Werner knew she would not be around to bail the son out.)

Wil Mar was also short on reimbursement because Wil Mar and St. Anne's had a major construction project going at the same time and Werner was his own general contractor. Werner was an extremely cost conscious contractor and he built both additions for an unbelievably low cost. He built the 3rd floor at St. Anne's with ancillaries, including 3 new day rooms and a chapel and Director of Nursing office for just under \$9,000 per bed. Anyway when things overlapped he would assign the costs to the St. Anne's cost center instead of to Wil Mar which resulted in the St. Anne's cost center increasing and Wil Mar's decreasing. St. Anne was Werner's "crown jewel", the one project that earned him a lot of money over the course of his ownership. Citizens for Better Care was always targeting him for grief because they always obtained and perused every nursing home's cost reports and they saw that Werner took better than \$60,000 a year out for salary and over \$300,000 a year out for profit after the construction was complete. Werner was shocked, delightedly so, when he got his 3 year rebasing after the construction of the 3rd floor was complete and he discovered that he was being reimbursed in such a way that he was making \$6.00 per patient per day profit and would continue to do so for the next 3 years. But at the same time he was very sad, realizing that when the next rebasing came he would have to sell St. Anne's, otherwise he would lose his shirt.

Werner was upset because he was his own general contractor, put in untold hours with a lot of aggravation chasing around for subcontractors, material, etc to get the best prices, quality, etc. He always hired non-union subcontractors as he hated unions, and besides he got a better price that way. The unions of the various trades would see major construction in progress and would stop by to see if the work was being done by union members. Both Werner and his subcontractors would say yes to avoid a hassle. Seymour the plumber started coming at 4 pm and working evening hours to avoid being dunned by the union plumbers. All Werner's contractors were first rate and did good quality work. The only major problems upon completion of the project was that the roof leaked badly, the contractors doing the excavating destroyed the continuous run of the drain tile around the building when they added on the day room causing a flood in the basement whenever we had heavy rains, and we had to install storm windows on the 2nd and third floor because the windows we got from Sullivan Industries were not of sufficient weather tightness to keep out high winds, making it impossible to maintain 75 degrees on the 3rd floor in bouts of very cold windy weather. We installed the storm windows shortly after Christmas of 1981 when we had an extremely bitter cold spell with high winds and we were unable to maintain even 50 degrees in the nursing home. In addition to the storm windows we also installed a double row of baseboard heat in all the rooms on the third floor. When the families and patients complained about the lack of heat over Christmas Werner muttered that he put in those very large windows for their edification and that this large glass area was the cause of the heat loss and if he knew they were going to be so ungrateful for the lovely windows he would have put in smaller ones and saved the heat loss.

Werner had in mind to sell St. Anne's to Beatrice and then later to me which is the reason why he fattened that cost center and not Wil Mar's. He was very disappointed in both of us when we both said that St. Anne's was beyond our capabilities to run. He wanted keep St. Anne's because that was the big money maker. Wil Mar never recovered from its triple loss of medicaid under billings, the embezzlement of patient pay funds and the loss of construction cost revenues. The medicaid under billings were in the neighborhood of \$80,000. Barbara Barr and I identified all under billings and we were able to recoup over \$30,000 by rebilling, but the \$50,000 was lost as it was over 1 year old and you have only 1 year to bill for payment. The embezzlement was a total loss. Margaret left work without notice, sold her home and moved out of state. About 8 years later I found that her husband is recently buried in the Utica city cemetery so I assume she is now back in town. When Werner sold me Wil Mar he said if he knew I was buying Wil Mar instead of St. Anne's he would have swung the additional construction costs Wil Mar's way instead.

I was happiest at Wil Mar but I could not say the same for Werner. He seemed equally happy at both places, but maybe he felt like a bigger rooster in the basket at St. Anne's for it was more modern and a bigger operation. Werner said over and over again that a nursing home had to be at least 100 beds to be profitable. When he purchased St. Anne's it had 69 beds so his goal was to bring it up to over 100 beds as the Administrator's salary was considerably higher for over 100 beds than under 100. So when Werner designed the project he included 105 beds. Actually now and again we would squeeze in and fill the 106th bed, but that wasn't sanctioned by the State. 100 beds was considered by everyone to be the break even number.



Wil Mar roof repair



beginning of rooms 10 & 11

Werner had a construction project going at Wil Mar at about the same time. Wil Mar was two distinct buildings with a courtyard in between. The 2 buildings were not connected. Wil Mar had only 39 beds when Werner purchased it. With the new construction Werner abolished the courtyard by placing a center building where the courtyard had been.



The dayroom new construction



The dayroom and room 10 new construction

He added a lobby, a nurse's station and surrounding space, a huge dayroom, a Director of Nursing office, his office, a dirty utility room, a clean utility room, he took the roof off a garage and turned it into room 10, and then he built a block structure that became room 11. On the other end he added 2 community bathrooms, a private room, room 12, a 4 bed room, # 13, and a 2 bedroom #14. He also added a clean utility room next to room 12. He thus increased the beds from 39 to 52, thus increasing the Administrator's salary as the salary increased after 50 beds. The Wil Mar construction was also very difficult as he added on to rooms 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19, giving each one of them one more bed each. We had 2 rooms at Wil Mar that did not meet the new square footage per bed requirement – rooms 10 and 9. Werner and I were quite concerned we may lose a bed in each of these rooms in time if the Health Dept decided not to continue to grant a waiver. So one day I stood in each of these rooms and studied what could be done with them. I realized that room 9 ended just before the stairway to the second floor and I realized that that enclosed space could be opened up and added to the square footage of room 9. I then studied room 10 and realized that if we popped the window outwards and made a bay window out of it we could gain just enough room space in each of these rooms to meet requirements without waivers. Werner was very skeptical of my suggestions at first but when he went to each of these rooms and studied them with a critical eye he could see what I was getting at. So he hired Marvin Stadler who made the necessary additions and now both rooms are no longer waived. (But Marvin did not properly flash the top of the bay window and for years we had floods and gooshy plaster every time it rained hard.)

We had two more waiver problems at Wil Mar that bothered Werner and me that we were unable to solve. The first was the fact that we had no elevator to the second floor, necessitating that the patients who went upstairs had to be able to climb and descend stairs, a rare attribute for most nursing home patients. We were okay for most of the years Werner and I owned it as we had the younger mental hospital long term patients who lived upstairs for years and years. The problem came at the end of Werner's lifetime when the health dept decided to move most of the mental patients to group homes. That emptied the upstairs beds for the most part and new admissions were seldom able to fill those beds. Werner and I had no problems as we were always above the 85th percentile of patients and thus always received full reimbursement. In Werner's last few years of his life he and I earnestly studied the possibility of putting an elevator in but were never able to find a proper place to put it without losing beds. Werner hired Cummings, the architect who worked for the city of Utica to draw up plans. He took Werner's money, started the plans, and never finished them. We ended up suing them and never got any plans that were usable. The real problem came in in that the unfinished section and the patient occupied section were on two different levels and the elevator would have to have two stops to accommodate both but no one could design something that would work. Werner had plans to put in 6 senior living apartments in the unfinished section but abandoned those plans after the shell was put up due to the elevator problem.

The other problem that was only brought up once but was very dangerous was the ramp leading from room 9 to the nurses' station. Ramps are required to have a 1 in 12 slope and this one was steeper. Werner almost had apoplexy when he heard that one, but when the physical plant surveyor checked with Mrs. Shott she told him that the ramp had been grand fathered in and so it did not have to meet the present specifications. In regard to the elevator Werner said that putting an elevator in or moving a bathroom to the new section was a very dangerous undertaking

because the health dept could require that all of the older section be brought up to code and that could be a real nightmare, and a very costly one at that.

Werner had a few construction nightmares at St. Anne's as well. First of all Werner built the chapel and the nurses' office underground, which was excavated under the sidewalk which was on city property. Secondly after the 3 new dayrooms were constructed on what used to be the parking lot, one of the maintenance men said he thought the archway was starting to sink down & lean sideways. Werner almost had a stroke when he heard that. Werner went upstairs, looked it over, measured it and was greatly relieved to see that all was in order. It was just dumb cheap talk on the maintenance man's part. The other problem, mentioned earlier, is that the block layers cut the drain tile and didn't put new in and consequently we had a basement flood every time it rained hard. The 3rd problem was that the roof leaked, both during construction and even after the roof was tarred. Werner put more tar on, but it always leaked. One of the problems they told him was that the roof was tar except by the elevator it was cement. They said it would always leak where the two surfaces met. Werner made a very fine patio up on the roof on the cement part and had the elevator go up to the roof. Werner had many fine parties for his patients and the help during the summer months.



Wil Mar

Werner would spend all morning at Wil Mar, eating breakfast and lunch there, then about 1 pm or so he would drive to St. Anne. As soon as he walked in the door he would bellow what is for dinner? By 3 pm he expected a plate full of food to be set before him on his elaborate scrolled desk in his office. On a typical day there would be St. Anne's kitchen help scurrying back and forth serving him various foods and beverages. Many a person who barely knew Werner would remark to me years later how much food would come across Werner's desk in the course of an afternoon at St. Anne. Werner drank gallons of liquid, probably in large part due to his high blood sugar level in the last 10 years of his life. Werner always had a very large, much oversized colorful plastic beaker always full of diluted orange juice at his elbow. And if the food and beverages did not flow in an orderly and timely fashion across his desk, boy would he bellow. He would holler his head off until he had both the secretarial and the kitchen staff jumping.

Werner had 3 lines coming into his St. Office. 886-2500 was the line given out to the public. Bonnie in the billing office or the secretary in Werner's office would answer this line, depending on who was less busy. 886-2501 was a roll over line from 2500. Then only on Werner's desk was his private line, 343-0657. Only he would answer that line. If he was not there you just let it

ring unless he told you differently. Werner had call forwarding in those days when it was not a popular option. When he left for the day he would forward the calls to his home in Utica. If someone called him long distance on this line it would cost him the long distance charges so he would holler at them to get off the line, it was costing him money. In the early days that I was dating Werner I found out after his death another call forwarding he did with the 343 line. When he would go to visit Beatrice on Crooks Rd he would forward his calls there and if I would call he would tell me he was at work. Then on his way to Utica he would swing by St. Anne's via 8 Mile Rd and then forward it to Utica.



Werner, Sandy & Mama by Christmas tree

A funny St. Anne's story from about 1977. I complained bitterly to Werner that it was almost Christmas eve and we had no Christmas tree at this house. He replied that he was too busy to buy and set up a tree. I told him I would do it. He bellowed that he didn't want me to spend money on a tree. I told him I wanted one. So he acquiesced. But his subsequent actions in obtaining a tree for his house left us all nonplussed. He told the maintenance man to pick up the decorated tree in his office, carry it out to his car and drop it in his trunk, bulbs and all! The maintenance man looked at him waiting to see him laugh at such a joke. But to everyone's chagrin Werner was serious! So the maintenance man picked up the tree and dropped it in Werner's trunk with bulbs flying. And Werner drove home with a trunk wide open with a decorated Christmas tree sticking out the back. (No, you really don't want to know how many bulbs busted or bounced out along the highway. I'll spare you the pain of that knowledge.)



Judy Oust, Werner & Mr. Oust

Christmas time was always the time that Werner would write his “State of the Union” speech to the staff telling them how hard things were in the nursing home industry, how tight money was, how rotten the health dept was and then he would thank them profusely for their loyalty and all their hard work. He would put a lot of thought and work into those letters and then he would dress them up with some fancy Christmas artwork. At St. Anne’s he would usually tri fold them and print them on heavy construction paper. This started in the earlier years after the union drive fiasco at St. Annes and then continued on year after year as a way of keeping the staff loyal and content. These letters would be passed out along with a little Christmas bonus which was dependent upon one’s longevity and loyalty. Judy Oust and Maxine Parrish and Marilyn Pann helped him with his first letters and also the St. Anne’s hand out brochure which went to prospective families of new patients.

Werner also was good to his aides, his little lambs as he called them. He always kept their break room staffed with bread, cheese and lunch meat and condiments as well as milk, juice and coffee. He got a little miffed when they complained about the sameness of the cheese and meat and threatened to pull their free lunches.

Werner hated his little lambs spending their hard earned money on him so he forbid them to buy him a birthday card. He told them instead to take a piece of paper and a pen off the nursing home floor and make him a home made card. He said that would mean so much more to him. So that’s what they did. They were beautiful and original and he loved them all. The very best card ever came from his “star” Sam. At the time the card was made by her Werner was on the warpath due to a bad health dept survey which said that Wil Mar was not doing it’s nursing paperwork. So Sam made Werner a card, which said “no job is ever done until the paperwork is complete.” And on the face of the card it showed a big picture of Werner, a very good likeness of him at that, sitting on the toilet with his pants around his ankles! We all loved that card and marveled at the fine artwork with the little roll of toilet paper at Werner’s side. But Sam was scared to death when she presented him with the card. She was terrified that he might be highly offended and fire her. But Werner liked the card very much and it never entered in his head to be offended. Barb Hughes gave Werner a birthday card that was prophetic and gave me the chills. It told Werner to enjoy life each day as there is not much left. I re read that card after his death and it gave me the same sober feeling and then I said to myself, how true that verse proved to be.



Barbara Jean Hewitt



Werner & Toni Camargo

Barb and Toni used to bring in a thermos of coffee as they did not like the nursing home’s brew. Werner would ask for some out of their thermos when Wil Mar’s was not ready yet and once he

tasted theirs he was hooked. Every day he would beg for coffee out of their thermos and soon they both started making excess amounts in order to keep him supplied throughout the day.

Barb was an excellent worker and always had the patient's best interests at heart but Werner was always leery of her and used to remark that she would make a good union organizer. That never happened but I had to agree with him. We had to be careful to keep Barb appeased.

One day I had an appointment and was not around in the evening and so Werner went into the nursing home alone and was looking very sad so Sam and Toni went up to Werner and told him he was going to be their date for the night, that they were going to take him to the show, which they did. They bought him his ticket and a bucket of popcorn and then when they got to the seat they started a big fight over who was going to sit next to him! Wait a minute, I said when I heard this, Werner has two sides and there were only 2 of you, so why the fight? I don't know, we were just jealous, was Toni's reply. They had a real nice time that evening and Werner enjoyed seeing a funny movie with his 2 stars. Toni will never forget the fun evening she had with Werner.

I will never forget the fun times I went to the show with Werner because there were only 3 shows we ever went to together in our whole 16 years together. Twice we went to see the JFK movie, once with Mali and Carleen and once by ourselves. We were so exhausted from running that Nursing Home that both times we slept through over half of the movie. In fact we went again because we slept through it the first time and wanted to see all of it, but once again we were not successful in staying awake.

Another time Sam was afraid she might offend Werner and get fired was the day she came in dressed like Werner, pillow stuffed in her pants, beard and all. But Werner loved it and complimented her on her ingenuity in copying his likeness. Werner always knew what he was and what he was not. He was by and large quite comfortable with himself, although he would have liked to have been thinner. He never worried about his image or what other people thought of him. The one exception to this might have been when he visited Tante Henny or Onkel Herbert. He was conscious of his appearance and demeanor on those occasions and always wore a nice jacket and dark slacks and socks under his sandals. (He could almost never wear shoes from the time I met him because his feet and ankles were so swollen from his bad heart that he couldn't fit into shoes.) He never worried about losing his dignity in public, either. When displeased over something he could bellow like a stuck pig or give an embarrassing speech to illustrate his point, usually outlining what he considered to be the absurdity of others trying to put on a false front to appear to be more than they were. Werner loved cutting pretenders down to size. In the nursing home industry as we sat there and listened to other owners get up and puff themselves up and promulgate their points of view, Werner would say to me, "I never saw so many stupid people sitting on so much money".

Werner's sandals were inevitably broken down and trod on because he needed wide, sturdy sandals which they do not sell here. He would get his sandals in Germany but in 1980 when we were there and looked in all the shoe stores they no longer sold the sandals he preferred to wear. Edna and I bought him sandals here but they were never quite satisfactory as they were too narrow for his water swollen feet.

Brian was another aide whom Werner liked and who liked and respected Werner. Brian had a nervous condition and was on disability but he tried his best to work, albeit part time was the best he could handle. Brian had a real good heart and would do many kind acts for others. Brian was also a very good photographer and he took many fine pictures and arranged them into albums and shared them with us. He took many pictures of our Christmas parties and we have some nice pictures of Werner as a result of Brian's efforts. Brian had a crush on Toni and Werner, in all playfulness tried to get Toni to date Brian, to no avail. But Brian continued to admire Toni from afar and in the present Brian drives Toni many places she needs to go and even takes her and the girls to the park and has given them many fine pictures of themselves on these outings.



Peggy Allagreen

Rob was another aide Werner liked. Rob also liked Werner and was very loyal to him and had a genuine affection for him. Rob had a drug problem which Werner knew about, but Werner was always very understanding and sympathetic to human frailties and accepted Rob as he was. A few years after Rob was at Wil Mar Peggy started pairing Rob and Toni off together. Toni was not sure of this, but Peggy played cupid and kept pushing the match. As the romance progressed Peggy even drove Toni and Rob to the Wardel motel and would pick them up a few hours later. One time Peggy picked them up and was driving out of the parking lot there when Werner and I drove past in Werner's blue Cadillac going to the bank right across the street. Quick! Duck! Peggy shouted to Rob and Toni as she shoved Rob's head under the dash. She didn't want Werner and I to see the 3 of them driving out of the Wardel together. Rob was a very likeable guy but very impetuous, which he has been all of his life. Rob was an unsettled soul, always switching jobs, which he did a number of times while working for us. He would quit and take a construction job, then later return to us for awhile, only to quit again.

One day Toni discovered she was pregnant with Rob's child. It was a happy time for her as she always wanted a child of her own and was now 30 years old. Toni worked at Wil Mar throughout her pregnancy until the birth of Chelsea in April, 1992. There is a very funny story to tell when Toni was 7 months pregnant. Mr., let me shave you, Toni said to Werner one very busy afternoon. So she brought out the shaving cream and the razor and plunked her apparatus down on the desk in front of him. She then lathered his face and got to work shaving him. Well, it seems that she no sooner got started when his phone started ringing off the wall and he was hard at work with one phone call after another. Toni would start on one side of his face and tell him to put the phone on the other ear. He would then say he couldn't hear right and put the phone back on the other ear, getting in Toni's way, So she would start shaving on the other side of his face, then he would switch ears again and would wrap the cord around him and Toni. Soon the cord was totally around him and Toni and they were big belly to big belly and Toni was all wrapped up and shoved in the corner and couldn't move. Mr., I'm stuck! Toni hollered as she was laughing heartily. With your belly pressed against my belly I can't move! Move!! Toni told

him. You move!! Werner replied. I can't move, you have to move, I'm Stuck in the corner!! Toni hollered back at Werner. They then had to unwrap the phone cord as Werner bellowed that she was interrupting his call.



Werner & Mopsy

Another fun Toni story was when Werner and I just came back from a visit to East Germany. We had stopped in a Jew's furrier shop in Weimar off a side street and had admired his fine fur coats. I tried many on, but none fit, they were all too small. The Jew then said if we gave him the measurements he could have one custom made for me. I figured that was the end of that as we were going home in a few days. So I decided to look around at his other fur things on display before exiting the shop. I saw a black cat's tail that looked exactly like Kitsey's tail, so I had to have it. Werner and I brought the tail home and a few days after we were back at Wil Mar the perfect opportunity to play out a spoof arose. We had two baby Shepherds, Mopsy and young Bear. They were 5 and 6 months old and full of life. I had Kitsey in the blue house. Kitsey was born October 16, 1991 so he was also just a kitten yet. Kitsey was a tough hombre. I told Shaggy Dog pet shop I wanted a kitten so around December 16th they called me and told me they had a litter of kittens in. There were 7 kittens in this litter. I told them I needed a tough, hardy guy as he would be going home to 2 rough and tumble Shepherd puppies. In unison all 3 shop employees picked up Kitsey by the scruff of his neck and said, this is the one you want. I expected to take him with me but they said no, they wanted to bathe him and de-flea him before I got him so I went back and picked him up at 4:30 p.m. I took him right home to the blue house and put him down on the dining room floor. Boy, did those Shepherd puppies ever come after him lickety split! Kitsey wasted no time whatsoever, he ran up the steep stairs right behind him and fled into the safety of the second floor. He just stood at the entrance to the stairs and when he found the Shepherds weren't coming after him up those steps, he just rolled over and over, scratching his back on the rough boards upstairs. That became his little kingdom, his refuge from the puppies. We put his litter box and his food, water and milk up there.



Kitsey

Kitsey soon became quite brave in the face of those two ruffian Shepherds. He soon came downstairs and stayed on my desk, looking down with disdain at those two co-inhabitants of his little kingdom. I soon bought Kitsey a 2 story kitty condo so he had some place to sit up high away from the groping mouths of those two puppies. Kitsey loved his kitty condo and spent many an hour on top of that curled up while I worked and the puppies circled around it in total frustration, unable to nibble on the cat. Once in awhile the cat would get bored and looking for a little action, would come down onto the floor and then the race would begin! Boy those Shepherds were after the cat like a posse after an outlaw. When they would get too close sometimes the cat would jump up on the desk and on the way up a dog would grab a paw and start chewing on it. The cat would then pull the paw out of the dog's mouth, and shake off the paw, with a look of utter disdain on its face. The cat thought the dogs were far beneath him. They were toys to be trifled with .



Mopsey



Young Bear

The dogs were pooping and peeing all over the blue house and since Mopsey came I couldn't get either one of them trained, so in total desperation I had a doggy door put in to the kitchen door and then left the outer porch door open so they could come and go as they pleased. That did the trick. Within 48 hours they did all of their jobs outdoors. But now the doggy door posed a new problem. The cat watched the dogs come and go and figured out that he could escape the house this way too. I tried to keep the cat in by blocking the door after the dogs went out, but would then have to unlock the door when the dogs were ready to come back in. As you may have guessed the cat escaped many a time. But there was another crazy development attached to this doggy door. Young Bear would grab the cat by the hairs on the top of his head, with the cat hanging straight down out of little Bear's mouth, then little Bear would head full speed out the doggy door, slam dunking the cat full force into the doggy door on the way out! The cat made no sound, he just merrily went along for the free ride! And Mopsy followed young Bear out, as always. Mopsy was ever the follower. Young Bear made all the decisions and little Mops followed on his coat tails. Mopsy never initiated anything on his own, he was a follower, born and bred. But when the dogs and the cat got outdoors that is when the fund began.



young Bear



Mopsy



Kitsey

The first time young Bear slam dunked the cat out the doggy door I was real busy and was not able to run outdoors to rescue the cat right away. Before I knew it, one very angry Ann came walking in the door with Kitsey in her arms, saying she had a mind to report me to the Humane Society for what was happening to my kitten. What happened? I asked, wondering why she was so hot. Seems young Bear took the kitten into the back yard and then flung him to Mopsy, who caught the cat and flung him back to young Bear, who in turn grabbed him in his mouth once again. And all the while the cat was screaming for his life, MEOW!! on the first fling, ARGGH!! On the return throw.



Ann Kay with little Harrigan

Ann ruined the ball game by prying the cat out of Bear's jaws and holding him fast in her arms returned him to me, whom she deemed to be an unfit mother at this point. The kitten was returned to the top perch of his Kitty condo and was determined to be none the worse for wear. A few days later the cat was back on the floor teasing the dogs. Bear once more got him by the head hairs and slam dunked him face first through the doggy door going full speed ahead. I saw it this time and grabbed my coat right away and ran outdoors. The scene which greeted me was truly a comical one. Here was my kitten upside down in the snow, half covered in snow and Mopsy was holding the cat down by the mid section with his paw while little Bear was busy making digging motions, flinging snow over the cat, burying him in the snow bank next to the blue garage! I had to stop and watch and laugh for awhile before rescuing the cat, it was such a comical scene. But I eventually grabbed his 8 lb. body and brought it back into the house, much to the consternation of those two erstwhile playmates of his.



Werner



Sandy



Edna



Toni



Barbara Hewitt

So this was the setting for the spoof Werner then played on the aides in the nursing home. Everybody knew about those two above mentioned incidents and were angry with me over them. So one day Werner walked into the nursing home carrying a black cat's tail, saying, hey, look, I found this lying in the backyard, but where's the rest of the cat! Toni was the first to see the allegedly severed tail and she freaked! She went running to Edna in the kitchen, screaming, Edna, Edna, the dogs pulled the tail off the cat and now we can't even find the rest of the cat! Edna came tearing up the basement steps, went running into the front office, saw the tail and just about lost her mind. Barbara Jean saw the tail and was also mighty upset at Werner and me. Well Edna went tearing over to the blue house and came back with the cat all wrapped up in my brand new sweater. She then uncovered the cat showing he was alive and well, tail and all. I had a fit that she dirtied up my brand new sweater. She wasn't one bit repentant, saying it served me right for pulling such a dirty trick on her. Edna said she could have got a heart attack over that. Her system did not return to normal until late in the day and I heard about this trick for years and years afterward.. Werner hated cats and thought this was a fine old trick to play, although he was hesitant at first to do it when I put him up to it. He knew it would upset Edna to no end.



Tinker Bell

Kitsey was the second cat I had. The first one, an orange and white really little thing, I brought into the house the end of September, the day after Sable Bear died. I took my mom for a ride and at the end of the ride we decided to go into the Humane Society shelter and look at kittens as the vet said I couldn't have a dog for 8 weeks in case what Sable Bear or old Bear had was contagious. I was going through chemotherapy at the time and needed a pet to keep me company as I suffered so through those 6 months. So we went in and looked and I and mom both loved this little orange and white cat, the smallest little one in the shelter. I soon found out why it was the smallest one. Within a few days it started running from the nose and mouth. I took it to the vet and she gave it ampicillin which I had to administer by an eye dropper for a month. It was okay for about a month after that, but by the end of November it started becoming lethargic and

sitting on the heaters. I took it back to the vet and we started ampicillin again, to no avail this time. The cat just got worse and worse and finally the vet said we had to put it down. So on the 2nd of December, 1991 I put little Tinker Bell to sleep.

Werner would never let me have Kitsey in his house as he said Tinker Bell's litter box stunk so bad. I later found out that it stunk so bad because of whatever infection it had. Kitsey's litter box does not stink. Kitsey never came into Werner's house until 6 months or so after he died.

Werner had a cat before I met him. It lived on Wyoming in his apartment. He had that cat when Mutti visited him. Boy, was that ever a mean cat! It ended up scratching every kid on the neighborhood. Mutti would relate the complaints against his cat to him when he got home in the evening. Werner also had a dog before I met him, a German Shepherd mix I think it was. The dog never had any vaccinations and it caught distemper. He took the dog to Bordman's here in Utica but the vet was not able to save his dog.



Trully Bear



Werner & Trully Bear

Werner loved his dogs. He picked the first dog out on a very cold day just before Easter, 1984. He called the first Shepherd, who was born on February 29th 1984 Trully Bear. He saw an ad in the Whistledown Kennel in Algonac and called her and discovered that she had 2 litters of pups that would be ready to go in about a week. We went on a Saturday afternoon and took a look at her litters. Werner wanted to buy based on price, so he chose her 300 dollar quality, the cheapest she had. She showed us several mostly black and tan pups from one litter and a chocolate colored one from another litter. The chocolate one looked much healthier than the rest so I chose that one. But Werner wanted the biggest black and tan one from the first litter. That dog was shy and hid in a corner. He also had a white tip to his tail. Werner was insistent that we take the big Shepherd. I did not like the looks of his health or mental disposition. I had had in mind to get a Shepherd with lot of gold in him, especially a lot of gold in the face. Werner nixed that idea, he wanted a black faced one as they look fiercer and would scare people more. So one week later we went back and picked up Trully Bear. He was sick from the get go. I took him back to her for her advice as he was having an extremely foul smelling green feces which ran like egg white. She

told me what kind of virus it might be and to tell the vet that. That dog just wouldn't eat. I chased him all over the place trying to tempt him with every kind of food imaginable, with only moderate success.



Ann Kay with Harrigan

Then one day Ann looked over the fence at our skinny dog and told Werner she was turning him in the SPCA as he wasn't feeding his dog. This shocked Werner to the very core as he would never starve a dog and he had tried so hard to get this dog to eat. This dog was normal weight for a puppy until we went to Germany and gave him to Laura, an LPN that worked for us to baby sit while we went to Germany. When we came home he was very thin and wouldn't eat right at all. Laura did have a funny story to tell us when we got back. She bought a lb. of hamburger and had put it in the refrigerator. Truly Bear watched her do that. When she got busy elsewhere in the house Truly Bear went to the fridge, pulled on the towel hanging there and got the fridge to open. He then stuck his head in the fridge and pulled out the lb. of hamburger and ate the whole thing. When Laura returned to the kitchen all she saw was some cellophane and the container the hamburger was sitting on.

On Easter Sunday we took some fine pictures of Werner and Truly Bear in front of the Magnolia tree in front of Wil Mar. They both looked so fine in those pictures. We also took a picture of me and Truly Bear in front of that Magnolia. That was a very fine tree and bloomed gorgeously every year around Easter. But the year the employees caused all the trouble at Wil Mar the blossoms wilted before they opened and the bark of the tree turned blackish and never again did that tree bloom in all its glory.

Things went downhill for Truly Bear after that. He had such pain in his fore legs the whole time we owned him. Growing pains. We were told, give him some pet tabs. But he did have wonderful hips and very finely aligned teeth. He was a good jumper due to good hips. But one time I felt so bad because he jumped into my car and I accidentally clamped the door shut on his tail. Boy, did he ever scream! I felt so bad about this. Most of the time Truly Bear went everywhere with Werner. The one time he didn't is probably what caused the beginning of the end for Truly Bear. I had to go to Lansing and I left Bear home with Werner. Werner had to go to St. Anne's and he couldn't find Truly Bear so he took off without him. Someone called the pond on him as he was roaming around waiting for us to come home and they picked him up and put him in an outdoor cage at the shelter. I was not able to pick him up until the next day as I got

home from Lansing after they closed for the day. I feel that there was a good possibility that he might have picked up a fatal virus while there over night. Then in August he got really sick and I was taking him back and forth to the vet, with no improvement. Then one time the vet gave him an injection of polymixin and for the first time in a week Truly Bear perked up and ate small raw hamburger balls that Werner had fixed for him. That was his last meal. I was busy buying Wil Mar from Werner and had no time to take Truly Bear back for another polymixin shot and the oral antibiotics did not work. He collapsed and we took him to Gasow clinic on the recommendation of a friend. That was on August 10th. We dropped him off there then we went to my cousin's wedding that night and while we were there Truly Bear passed away. Werner found out the next morning and again he treated me awful. He got a wash basket and told me to get in the car with him we were going to get Truly Bear. I was led to believe he was alive by what Werner said. When we got there Werner stormed the place, demanding to immediately see Truly Bear. They brought us in the back and there laying at a grotesque angle was Truly Bear, in a very undignified pose and very, very dead. I was shocked at how Werner just picked up his body with one hand and slopped the dog into the wash basket. That was not his usual manner as he truly loved that dog. He would always take that dog with him to work every day. The dog would go into his office and stay there until Werner was ready to go home. When he heard Werner rattle his keys he would get up and excitedly wait to go into the car. Werner did not use a leash with this dog, depending on the dog to follow him which he did. This was definitely Werner's dog, not mine. He looked to Werner and followed him everywhere. And now at 5 ½ months he was dead, unceremoniously dumped into a wash basket. He drove the dog home and then we dug a grave for the dog near a nut tree. Werner said to carefully choose a place we could remember and find again, so we chose to the south of the nut tree. Werner gave the dog a nice graveside service and then we commended him to the earth. All I remember was those long tan puppy legs sticking out at an odd angle as we were burying him. It did not seem right to bury a puppy. It was just a few weeks ago that he was in our backyard on Grant Park walking around mom's family as we had a picnic. We took a few pictures of him that day but they turned out foggy, sort of a preamble to his fading out of this world and into the next.

We also took Truly Bear to Noel Keene's campground near Jackson. Werner had loaned Noel \$25,000 to buy an adjacent piece of property that bordered on a lake. It was a very valuable acquisition for Keene but he didn't have the 25K cash on hand and he had to have it right away as the State of Michigan was bidding against him as they wanted the land for a park of their own. Noel had negotiated with the estate of the former owner and they said if he could come up with the 25K they would sell it to him. So he called Werner and Werner agreed. Werner had Morris Brenner draw up the paperwork and had Noel and his wife sign personal liability, and then gave him the 25K loan. So now Noel wanted Werner to see the campground and to invest in it as a part owner. Part owner would also entail considerable physical labor in order to bring the campground up to snuff. Boy, this wasn't going to work out, I said to myself. Unless Werner envisions me working Mon – Fri at the nursing home and all weekend doing hard physical labor at the campground. Well, anyway, one fine summer afternoon Werner, me and Truly Bear went up to his campground. Werner let Truly Bear out of the car and the race was on! Truly Bear made the acquaintance of another young dog, and they were off to the races! Round and round the camp and the car they went, until they both dropped of exhaustion. Then they got their second wind and they were off again. They had a fabulous time together. This was one of the few times

in his little short life that he was truly vigorous and happy. This is one of my most pleasant memories of our little guy.

We met Noel Keene in about the fall of 1981 as Werner and I had been together since December 1976 and no child was on the horizon. We had already been to several fertility specialists, including Hassan Amerikia, Dr. Jonathan Ayres and Dr. Jan Behrman and other doctors at the Beaumont fertility clinic. Dr. Behrman was a real trip. He loved making dirty sexual innuendoes during the initial interview. I felt dirty and disgusted listening to him. We had been through many tests with no positive results. Werner went to Dr. Silberman in the Midwest for his fertility work up. We even went to see Dr. Kappy Rothman in California, a male fertility specialist. That was the neatest office we had ever visited. In front of his chairs he had a large coffee table and on the coffee table was a partially completed 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle. I loved being able to put a few of my own pieces in while we waited. Then when we got into his private office he had a glass container and in the container sperm were swimming all over the place. I wondered how he got the proper magnification so we could see that display. He was a neat doctor but alas, he also did not help our problem. He ended up putting Werner's sperm into a cervical cap which he applied. We then traveled 200 miles south and we discovered we could not remove the cap ourselves, and had to go to a hospital, who also had a hard time. Werner also went to a urologist in Boston, and also to Dr. Oldford and Dr. Pontis locally. They all told him he had sufficient sperm at times. But pregnancy never came to pass. I found out after Werner's death that he always had a fertility problem and none of his fiancées ever got pregnant. But he never told me that.

We had one major dustup over this fertility workup. He had me scheduled for a laparoscopy in Ann Arbor in 1982. He was driving like the furies from Hell were after him through a major snowstorm in the hills of West Virginia. He could have got us killed, and I told him so and asked what the all fire rush was. He told me he had to get home for my surgery the next day. I told him it was not worth getting killed over and to reschedule it, which he did. When I finally did go to the hospital he registered me as Mrs. Wilhelm. Then the next day as they were wheeling me into the pre op area he told me he was going to the office. I was really upset. I told him who was going to claim the body if I didn't make it? He stayed. My surgery was delayed and so he asked for and got permission to stay by my side until I went in. I thought that part was very sweet of him. The night before he was with me and we had a lot of entertainment as President Reagan was shot that day and it was all over the TV. The fertility test showed that I was able to get pregnant. All our fertility testing showed we were able to have a child, but none ever came.

So we turned to Keene who we had seen in the local papers. His baby broker business was in its infancy in those days. He was most hospitable to us and made us feel right at home. He got a real kick out of Werner's personality and they hit it off right away. Keene had several books full of surrogates which he showed to us right away before we even plunked down any hard cash. We liked the looks of several of the girls in the books and so Werner gave him his \$5,000 fee and the \$10,000 to put into escrow for the girl we chose when the baby was born. Our first visit was to Keene's original office. In the office with us at the time was an American man with his Asian wife. The man was in there picking out an American girl to bear his child. Our next visit was to Keene's present office on Mason St. in Dearborn. We chose Carolyn as our first surrogate. She was an LPN living in Topeka. We flew her in, met her, signed her up and started. We had about 4 sessions total with her. At the end of the last session she told me in a round about way that she

had been pregnant since before our first session in February. She was a nice girl who loved to run in her free time. Werner and I bought her a fine, expensive pair of running shoes. I took her to the mall in the Dearborn area and also to the restaurant in Kingsville, Canada where we waded in Lake Erie after dinner. She wanted to work with us again later, then said she was joining the service. Later we got a letter from her saying she was pregnant and would we like to adopt her baby. Werner told me not to answer this letter, which on his insistence I didn't.

Our second surrogate was Karen, a vet in this area. Karen came from a candy maker family, and one day she came to us all upset. It seems that her father was never married to her mother and she had 4 half brothers and sisters she knew nothing about. They met over her father's death bed. The father had a stroke and was taken to the hospital where he was doing very poorly. After 4 days in the hospital a strange woman called up Karen asking "where is my father". Karen was shocked to discover that her father was also this woman's father and that this other woman was his legitimate child and she was not. The father died shortly afterwards, leaving almost everything to Karen's full brother. The half brothers and sisters contested the will. The brother decided to settle. He got quite a bit of his father's estate and Karen got just about nothing. They employed her part time in the business and paid her minimum wage. Karen had a good heart and she really loved Werner. She was faithful trying every month, even on Christmas Eve day. But it was not to be, much to all of our disappointment.

Werner put an ad in the German newspaper for a surrogate and he had one answer, a 38 year old married woman with 2 children of her own. She needed the money to help her husband get established in his own business. Werner did not like the fact that she had 2 children nor that her husband was a tool and die worker. He thought that a little too labor class for his child.

Noel Keene was getting a little impatient with Werner's slow, cautious approach to this surrogate business. Noel liked Werner and told him to pick 4 surrogates and work with them all simultaneously till he got a child. Noel grinned and told Werner that the rate he was approaching this baby business he was going to become a grandfather first. Werner paid in for 2 contracts, \$5000 each. But we never had two girls going at the same time.



Werner & Lisa Braunschweig

We then tried with Lisa, a young girl from Minnesota. We then used a Minnesota attorney as it became illegal in Michigan. We tried twice with Lisa, once in Michigan and once Werner flew to Minnesota. One week later Lisa told Werner she thought she was pregnant and he invited her to come to Michigan which she did. We had a blood test run which was negative but she still felt she was pregnant so we had another one run a week later and it was positive this time. She came to us it turned out because she had run up a \$400 phone bill on her aunt and the aunt was furious.

She then came to us at 4 am. I put her in the upstairs bedroom of the blue house. We had a phone up there and she spent so much time on the phone that I took the phone out of there. We gave her a job as a ward clerk at Wil Mar. She caught on but she was very slow and rather lethargic. She wanted a cat. We could not find a cat in the middle of winter so I bought her a small dog which she named Brandy, a name my mother had picked out for a small brown dog. When she left she originally was going to leave the dog to Sam, but at the last minute came back and scooped up the dog and took it with her. Not because she had any great love for the dog it turned out, but because she wanted to sell it for a profit. She returned to her mother and to her boyfriend, but she kept in contact with us, telling us she was pregnant and she believed it to be Werner's child. Werner and I were hopeful Werner had a far away hopeful look on his face as he said as much to himself as to me, "Maybe I got lucky this time". Lisa asked for \$400 from Werner right off the bat before she was pregnant which he gave her. Then she asked me for money after she was pregnant, which I sent her. Then her mother wrote and asked for more money for her, which we sent. She called us in Sebring telling us the baby was due the 3rd week in November, 1989. Werner and I flew home just before then to be close by. Then she informed us she was in labor and Werner was very hopeful. Then Werner started a real big fight with me over something trivial and so when he received the call that the baby was born I was over at the Blue House till he cooled off. He then told me the baby was born and I got in his car and he went to the Hallmark store and bought announcement cards, saying "It's a boy". He was extremely pleased that the child was a boy. Now we just had to prove it was his child through a HLA blood test. We had his and her blood tests done during the pregnancy and had them on file in Lansing. When the baby was born Werner and I drove in his old Cadillac to Minnesota, arriving there that night. We then took a motel in Minneapolis over night then drove to Alexandria the next day. I forced Werner, through much bellowing and hollering to take a shower so he would be clean in the presence of the new baby. I was so upset with him when I had him all nice and clean and found out he brought no change of clothes with him. As I was dressing that morning I thought of that new baby and was overwhelmed with the thought that I was going to be responsible for a strange man child's soul for the next 18 years. I was afraid of the baby, of what he would become, of our interaction with each other over the next 20 years. Werner was concerned with only one thing - proving that that was indeed his child.

We had agreed before the birth that the blood for the HLA testing would be taken from the umbilical cord and air shipped to Lansing. When we got there that had not been done and Lisa was talking about not having it done for 9 months. Absurd! We met the baby, a beautiful blue eyed blonde child. Werner was even more encouraged that it might be his when he heard the child had blue eyes. When I heard that the child's APGAR score was only 7 I felt fairly certain that that was not Werner's baby, but I still had some hope, although I feared a child with that APGAR score. Lisa took the baby home to her mother's trailer but our attorney fixed it so that we were to take the baby the next day. We were to take the child to Michigan, have the HLA blood test done, and if it was Werner's we were to keep and raise the baby. If it was not Werner's we were to return the child to Lisa. Lisa was devastated but she agreed to these stipulations. She said she made a promise and if it was Werner's she would not renege on her promise.

The next morning we arrived at the trailer park and right away I saw the number 822, which means family. It was the first of many numbers given to me by the spirit world. I was hopeful

that that number meant that that was Werner's child. I discussed this with Werner. He was respectful of the fact that a significant number had been related to us. We parked the car and went into the trailer. Lisa was not in the room. She retired to her bedroom and was sobbing. She would not come out to greet us. The mother and her boyfriend were in the living room with us as was the baby. The mother and boyfriend dressed up the baby. As they were doing so a very strong voice from the spirit world said to me, "This child is not Werner's". In my heart of hearts I knew this to be so, but I was also hoping on long odds that this might be Werner's. We said goodbye to the mother and boyfriend and took the baby to the car. As we were leaving the mother gave us a note from Lisa that she asked me to read when I got home.

The ride home was scary. There was much ice and snow on the ground and I was afraid for our safety as it was a long ride home. Werner was a very safe driver, albeit an unconventional one, so I had hopes we would get home in one piece. But alas, the heat went out in his car and we had to drive the 15 hours home with no heat in the dead of winter. I was very concerned for the baby and put him under a ton of blankets to keep him warm. About 1 am we rounded the curve into western Michigan in a blinding snow storm when all of a sudden our car lights went out. We were in total darkness on I 94 with no head lights. We couldn't find the exit off the freeway. All of a sudden a car got off an exit ramp right behind us so I hollered to Werner to hurry up and back up and then follow that car's lights to get off the freeway. Werner did that. We got off and turned left. There was nothing there but farm houses. I knocked on a door at 1 am but no one answered. Werner then told me to get back in the car and we drove in the opposite direction and soon found a State Police post. It was closed for the night! There was a call box outside of it. I called. The police said there was a motel about a mile down the road. I told Werner. We saw an all night diner. I told Werner to stop in there and I would get us a sandwich. He stopped. We each had a sandwich and something to eat. I wrapped up half of my sandwich to eat the next morning and kept half of my milk. I told Werner to do the same. He didn't. He was too busy verbally abusing a cowboy who had started mouthing off to him. Werner was mouthing off back and with a baby in my arms Werner was about to start a brawl which he was sure to lose. Somehow I managed to cool the situation off and we returned to the motel where we had rented a room. I again changed and fed the baby and he was soon fast asleep. The baby slept all through the night that night. I bundled him up and put him in a car bed on my bed next to me. The next morning was Thanksgiving day. We drove all day and got home just in time for me to have Thanksgiving dinner with my family. Werner did not want to go so he stayed with the baby who slept in a car bed on my side of the bed. I went to dinner, not saying a word about the baby until I found out if it was mine or not. Werner called during dinner asking me if I was coming home soon as the baby was crying and driving him to distraction. The baby had only cried once before, at the beginning of the car ride. It was a lone very high pitched brief wail. It immediately brought me in mind of the cry of a drug addict's baby. The cry this day was a normal one. I came home soon after he called and tended to the baby.

The next day we had an appointment in Lansing for the HLA blood test for the baby. I borrowed dad's car as mine had a bad engine. We then drove to Lansing and registered the baby for the blood test. I told the nurse who took the blood that at the end of the day this baby was either going to be a millionaire or a welfare recipient. Werner got the call at 3 pm. The baby was a welfare recipient. Not one thing in the baby's blood matched Werner's. Nothing. So much for the big to do we had in the hospital over the baby's birth certificate. Lisa wanted to name the

baby Matthew, and Werner wanted to name the baby Werner Eschenbach Brehmer Wilhelm. The nurse was stunned with this discrepancy but when Werner took her to one side down the hall it was decided that since the birth certificate did not need to be filed for 10 days that she would hold up until the blood test was known on Friday and then the birth certificate would be filed according to who was the father of the child. There was also a discussion as to circumcision. Werner said his son was not to be circumcised. The nurse said if Lisa wanted it done it could be done by the clinic so that was also deferred. When I heard the child was not Werner's I broke down and cried which I almost never do, because I realized that was probably my last chance for Werner and I to have a child, which it was. We pretty much gave up trying after that fiasco. I knew from the first HCG blood test that that child belonged to her boyfriend, but Werner and I wanted it so badly that I deceived myself those long nine months. I had a calendar in which I marked off the days till the baby was born. I bought a book showing the development of the baby and every week I would look at and show Werner what the baby looked like that week. We had discussions about the insurance and we sent spending money. I did not send her as much as I would have if I was sure it was Werner's but all along I had that niggling feeling that it was not ours. She assured us when she was 6 months pregnant that she and her boyfriend did not have relations until 2 weeks after the conception of the baby. She then called us in Sebring and told us the baby's pulse was a little slow and the doctor was concerned about it. After all this build up what a let down that was!

The other fertility disaster occurred when Werner and I went to Hutzel hospital and signed up for their in vitro program. Werner had to deposit \$3500 with them for the surgery which was not covered by insurance. We then had to pay cash for most of the rest of the program. I was pumped full of cancer causing hormones, the most dangerous being metrodin, in order to ripen multiple eggs for implantation after fertilizing them with Werner's sperm. I developed 5 ripe eggs and was very excited about the process of having them harvested and then fertilized in the petrie dish. But our hopes were forever crushed due to the incompetence of Dr. Magyar and his staff. His timing was off by 24 hours. He did not order the Hcg shot at the proper time. The ovulation occurred by itself and the 5 eggs were lost. As Werner and I left the hospital greatly upset over this turn of events we witnessed what I will probably never see again. Right over our heads outside the hospital was a triple rainbow. Very large, distinct and with large very colorful bands. It took up most of the sky. Several other people other than Werner and I were looking up at it too. We then went into the clinic across the street and had them do an AIH but to no avail. Never again was I able to produce 5 eggs. And then Dr. Magyar was let go from Hutzel as we later learned that he did not have one single pregnancy in the last 6 months. Would that we had known that – we would have gone to Beaumont instead as they had a better success rate. Still the success rate at that time hovered around 17 % at best.

About this same time Werner was having repeated bladder infections. We went from doctor to doctor trying to get rid of them. All doctors told him he would get rid of the infections by getting rid of the enlarged prostate which he refused to do. On one of our trips to the oil well country in Logan, Ohio Werner was given a new last ditch effort to get rid of his infection. The doctor gave him a bottle of gentimycin and a package of needles and told him to inject himself every 4 hours until the medicine was gone. You can guess who ended up doing the injection on the trip. We were on I 75 heading south when Werner looked at his watch, said it was time for another dose, pulled over to the side of the road, filled the needle, dropped his drawers right on the open

highway, bent over the hood of the car and told me to stick the needle in his rear end, which I did. Later when Bear was dying I learned that gentimycin is very toxic to the kidneys. I felt so guilty that I unknowingly injected him with something damaging to his precious kidneys. There is a lesson to be learned here. Never take any new medication without first reading all about it in the PDR. Once when the doctor gave me a medication which was optional to take I read in the PDR that one of the side effects of this drug was sudden unexplained death.

One day Werner came home from St. Anne's very frightened as he couldn't urinate at all. I took him to St. Joseph's emergency room and for over an hour they just left him sit. He was in great distress, I explained that to the staff and still no action. Werner called Dr. Timban from the emergency room and he told Werner to go directly to Holy Cross hospital and he would leave orders to have Werner treated right away as soon as he went in the door. The staff at St. Joseph's was surprised when we were leaving. I told them if Werner's bladder burst on the way we would sue them for malpractice. I drove fast over to Holy Cross, and true to his word the staff were waiting for him and immediately they put Werner on a gurney and proceeded to pass a catheter into his bladder. Werner shouted to the heavens with great pain when they did this. Then immediately they got over 1500 cc of bloody urine. That was a great relief to Werner although he was still in pain. They gave him an antibiotic and an Rx for an opium suppository to quieten down the enlarged prostate. We had a real hard time filling that Rx at that late hour and ended up at a hospital pharmacy. They gave us a real hard time until they proved that Werner was the person on the Rx and that a doctor really wrote that script. Werner then got a hold of Dr. Pontis the next day. He was shocked to learn that he had moved to Roswell Park in Buffalo., New York. But Werner called him long distance and was given permission to be admitted to Roswell Park under Dr. Pontis. So we flew out that morning and took a taxi to the hospital. We left the car in the short term lot and Werner told Rudi to pick it up and put it in his driveway until we got back. In the meantime Werner discovered that his telephone flip flop directory was missing. It fell out of the passenger side of the car when we parked. Boy, did I ever get yelled at for that! I never even saw the directory, otherwise I never would have left it sitting on the pavement. Fortunately someone saw it and when they read the \$100 reward inside, returned it to Werner.

When we got to the hospital the leg bag was full of urine. So Werner said I was to go into the men's bathroom with him and empty the bag. I balked at going into the men's room but when Werner screams at you loud enough anything seems reasonable. So in I went and when I opened the cock, all the blood red urine came out and then as a sudden a like amount of real dark red blood came flying out of his bladder and over filled the leg bag. I was afraid this was solid blood and I was afraid Werner might exsanguinate on me right on the spot so I refused to empty the bag the second time, feeling that this liquid might act as a tourniquet keeping all the blood from flowing out. I explained this to a nurse and she had a doctor examine Werner right away. The doctor then said it was mostly urine even though it was so dark and bloody in appearance and he emptied the bag a second time. They were wonderful to Werner there and when he left there his infection was cured for the time being but he wouldn't let anyone do anything about his greatly enlarged prostate which was the root cause of the bladder infections.

They told Werner to self catheterize if he wouldn't have surgery. Werner refused both, a decision which I feel greatly shortened his life as within one year he had severe urine retention which

caused his kidneys to greatly enlarge. Dr. Oldford said on x ray they looked like elephant ears. Werner started getting elevated BUN and creatinine readings from that time forward. Each year the kidney disease got worse and Werner was left with less and less kidney function. His high blood pressure and a blood sugar of 550 did not help one bit either.

One year later, on Valentine's day Werner was admitted to Harper hospital to room 214 V by Dr. Oldford. Dr. Oldford did a cystoscopy and determined that due to urine retention over the past year there was significant kidney enlargement and damage. They demanded that Werner learn self catheterization if he would not have surgery. He resisted mightily and I was the first one to catheterize him, showing him it was a simple and relatively painless procedure. He then did it himself with no problems for the rest of his life. . Years later he reminded me how I was the first one to do the catheterization. I ate lunch and supper with Werner in that room every day for a week, They were wonderful meals. We could check off what we wanted and they would bring us everything we indicated. Werner was on a diabetic diet and he checked off the equivalent of 2 meals every meal and he got it all. He thought they served a wonderful diabetic menu! The room was large and plush. They had a comfortable sofa for me and a table and chairs to eat on. It was the best accommodation Werner ever had. I stayed with him till 11 pm every night, then drove home and returned to him again the next morning. I had valet parking as it was in a bad neighborhood. Werner and I really enjoyed each other's company that week and also the week he was in Roswell Park, although in Roswell I had to go down to the cafeteria for all meals, thus ruining the social aspect of the meal. Also I did not appreciate the cockroach crawling over the dining table or the ones crawling along the baseboards in Werner's room.

While Werner was in Roswell I was not able to sleep in his room overnight, and there was really no need to as Werner knew he was not in any danger of dying at that point in time. Roswell hospital had an agreement with the local Holiday Inn to give me a \$57 a night rate on a \$125 night room in their hotel. I would stay with Werner all day until the end of visiting hours, which was about 8:45 pm. I would then go down to the lobby and wait for the next shuttle bus, which came about every 10 to 15 minutes. There were many people waiting in the lobby with me and when the bus came we pretty much filled it up. The first stop was the Ronald Mc Donald house about 2 blocks away from the hospital. The poorest of the poor stayed there and they were so very grateful to have a free place to stay while attending to their loved ones. The next group of people stopped at a reasonable priced hotel a little ways from the hospital. Finally the last stop was at the Holiday Inn about a mile away. Usually I was the only one to get off here, occasionally one other person got off here too. Roswell hospital was a very depressing place as all the other patients had cancer. The hospital was jam packed full of cancer patients as it was located very close to the love canal where there were high concentrations of carcinogenic toxic waste from the Hooker Chemical company.

When I was sitting all alone in the cafeteria of the hospital eating and reading a book the social worker approached me and asked me if I wanted to talk. I told her I didn't need to talk, but there was a dear soul sitting at the next table whose husband was fast losing the battle against cancer, was prostrate in his bed, and this woman, who had been a housewife all her life, was scared to death of the future. I suggested she go and sit with he, which she did. At that point I had about a 10 year reprieve from losing my dear husband. My days of anxiety, fear and loneliness were not yet upon me. That would come in 1992 – 93. For now I was safe and secure, my still vigorous

husband calling all the shots from his hospital bed. But I did fear that something would happen to him in his house and I would not be able to get in to help him, so as I carried his house keys back and forth to the hospital I did make a copy just in case for Werner's safety. Werner was a very private, guarded person who valued the security of his house. He locked it up solid whenever he left it and no one was allowed to remain there when he left. I respected his feelings and never used the keys to go in when he was not there except for one brief incursion when I had forgotten something important after he left. Fortunately no catastrophes happened to him when locked in his little Kingdom until the day 10 years later when he dropped dead on his bedroom floor.

When Werner was released from the hospital, his bladder infection temporarily cured and the bleeding at an end, I wanted to rent a car and go to Niagara Falls to see it in the winter before we flew home. Werner balked. He was weak and had no interest in the Falls, summer or winter. I finally prevailed. As you might have guessed, we rented a very used car from a firm called Rent A Wreck. And a wreck it surely was. It was a 1960's vintage auto and was missing part of its steering on the right side. The undercarriage and ball joints were 95% shot. It made loud flapping noises as you drove down the road as the fenders were coming loose. But it was cheap! It only cost \$10 for the whole day with no mileage charge. But there was one catch – you could only drive it for a 10 mile radius because that was as far as their wrecker cared to go to pick up the car when it broke down. I told him I was going to Niagara Falls. He said it was outside the towing radius. After some arguing around he agreed to let me take it.

Niagara Falls was magical in winter. The water that spews up into the air froze over all the trees and it looked like the Magic Kingdom. Werner and I sat in a restaurant overlooking the Falls and the grounds and we ate a leisurely lunch and soaked in the beauty of the ice laden trees. Werner was in a sore mood as he was weak and was missing his hospital bed. So we drove the rent a wreck back to the lot and took the next plane back to Detroit Metro where Rudi met us and drove us back to his place where Werner's car was sitting on the driveway on Florida St in Livonia. We then undertook the long drive home where Werner gladly hopped into his comfortable little bed. He always said a little German saying that he liked when he at long last at the end of a hard day would lay down in his much longed for bed, "Sleep you very well, in your little bed gestelle The next day he was back at his nursing homes. Albeit weak and shaky.

Work was Werner's whole life. He lived to work. He loved what he was doing and that is why he did so well in life. Werner always said that ones does best at what one likes to do best. Werner loved management. He loved being Director, Chief, top dog. He loved being the center of attention, and as the big boss he certainly was always that. People always perceived Werner as being the father they never had and they clung to him for love and guidance and protection. And he didn't let them down. If they were loyal and did their work half way then they were his Star and were ever under his guidance and protection. Girls worked hard to win his approval and to be one of his stars. He said over and over again the last year of his life, "They will miss me when I'm gone", and believe me, his Stars miss him desperately. It's not a family without him. It has become merely an institution. A place where you go to work, put in 8 hours and leave.



Werner with old Bear in his arms at Rudi's in Livonia

Our second dog was Old Bear. Werner was so upset over losing Truly Bear that he was in bed for most of that week. That was not at all like Werner and in fact was the only time I ever saw him like that in all the time I knew him. I just knew we had to get a new Shepherd to put Werner back on track. So I went back to Whistledown Kennel because I figured we could get a dog that looked a lot like Truly Bear as Werner really liked that look in a Shepherd. Again, there were 2 litters to chose from, one with 6 in it born July 2nd and one with 7 in it born July 3rd. They both looked about the same. One stood out from all the rest with his beauty, especially of face. His coloring was gorgeous and his head was large, which is what we were looking for in a Shepherd. They were only 5 1/2 weeks old so I had to wait about 2 weeks to bring him home. I had visited him 2ce waiting for him to grow up. But after 1 week I knew I could wait no longer. Werner was too depressed and sad. I needed another Shepherd to perk him up. And I wanted it to be special, something he would never forget. So I got a brainstorm. I called Rudi and Beatrice who lived in Livonia and asked them if they could invite Werner and I over and could I bring the puppy to their house first so when Werner came there he would find the puppy sitting in a basket full of balloons in their living room? They readily said yes although Rudi is far from a dog lover. So they called up Werner and invited him over for Sunday dinner, same as usual, and he accepted, same as usual.

One thing marred the day for me. A very large filling fell out of my back molar leaving a very large, painful hole. But my joy at getting a new puppy outweighed all else. I flew in my little Honda hatchback from Utica to Algonac. Then there was a long delay listening to all her instructions and filling out all the paperwork. Finally me and little Bear were on our way. I put him in a wash basket and sat him on the passenger side front seat. The entire very long trip to Livonia he continually crawled out of the basket and I continually reached over and put him back in the basket. What a nerve wracking ride. Finally I got there. I put the puppy in the basket full of balloons in their living room then pole vaulted back into the car and did a mad dash back to Utica to pick up Werner. Boy, did I ever get yelled at for being late! He kept telling me how rude that was to be late for dinner at Rudi and Beatrice's! And I kept thinking that they would understand, being I have been up at dawn orchestrating this little surprise for Werner. So off we

went, me still getting an earful of my rudeness at being late. Finally we got there and when Werner walked into their front room and saw the puppy in the basket full of balloons, he wondered to himself who was giving what to whom as he knew that that puppy would never grow into the kind of dog Rudi and Beatrice would want for a pet. We then told him it was his new puppy. Beatrice had Werner sit on the picnic bench out back and we put the puppy in his arms. It was love at first sight!

Werner just wrapped his big cuddly Bear arms around that puppy and just looked down at him with pure love. Bear was almost 6 weeks old. He weighed 8 lbs. He had blue eyes and no schnoot at this stage of his life. Werner used to raise the puppy up so that his and the puppy's faces were side by side and he would say to whoever he was showing the puppy off to, look, he has blue eyes just like his daddy! People would look at Werner like he was crazy – saying he was the natural father of the dog. But to Werner the dog was the most important thing in his life. He used to say his pecking order was: first come Werner, then come nothing, then came his Mama, then came nothing, then came his dog, then came nothing, then came nothing, then came me. The rest of the world Werner lost no love for. He used to say he hated people. He would say the Lord made such a beautiful world then he cheated it with the people.



Werner & Christopher Pitz

Werner let the puppy down and he roamed all over Rudi's back yard, which was fenced. Then the puppy did what comes naturally and it was so funny looking at Werner and Rudi looking down at the logs the puppy left in Rudi's yard. Rudi got a shovel and Werner picked up the logs and deposited behind the garage where he dug a hole to hide the offending matter. The neighbor behind Rudi had a dog and our little Bear and the neighbor's dog would run the length of the fence barking at one another. Christopher would get on his swing set and swing as high as he could make it go so we had to watch the puppy that he didn't get slugged in the head with the swing. Christopher was jealous of the attention that the dog got, so he used to sit down on the ground and with his legs extended outward, kick at the dog. The dog soon had enough of that nonsense and decided to defend himself by biting the kid's shoes. The leg got a bit in the way so he bit that too. We were afraid that combat was going to cause an international incident, but it didn't. But years after Bear was dead we were still reminded of that incident. I have to say that I always defend my dog, telling them that the kid started the fight.



Charlie Steele

When we brought old Bear home to Utica the next day Charlie saw the new puppy and asked with a disturbed tone to his voice, “What’s that?” When Werner replied with great pride, “That’s a German Shepherd!” Charlie replied, “They they they shit a lot!” Charlie was really scared he was going to be the chief pooper scooper detail. Charlie then built a very fine, large dog house for Bear so he would have a place to stay out of the inclement weather. When Charlie was done building it he then crawled in and out of it to show Bear what it was for. Bear just sat there and watched Charlie make a fool of himself. Charlie was the only soul who ever crawled in and out of that dog house. Bear used the dog house in later years to keep his rugby ball out of the rain.



Werner with old Bear on vacation

Werner loved to take Bear everywhere with us. He also wanted to take the dog into the restaurant with us like they do in Germany, but that didn’t pan out too well. So when he was in Germany in the DDR he found a short braided leash that looks just like a leader dog leash. He tried to get a leader dog harness made also but no one was able to do it. But he took that short braided leash and put it on Bear and took Bear into the Dairy Queen and sat down in the booth with the dog. They tried to evict the dog but Werner told them he was a leader dog for the blind So they let the dog stay but they were very doubtful and uncomfortable.

Beatrice’s mother really liked Werner and always tried to please him the best she could. And when we bought Bear and brought him over that was no exception. Beatrice’s mother always wore 3 inch heels and was somewhat unsteady when she walked up and down stairs, but to please Werner she wanted to feed Bear the scraps left over from our dinners on Florida street. So she would scrape together on one plate or bowl all of our left overs and then she would make sure they were bite size and then she would take the bowl down the side stairs leading to the side of

the back yard. She was somewhat unsteady while carrying the bowl, which would worry me, but she always managed to make it okay. And Werner was always so terribly pleased with her that she was feeding his Bear. She would then walk along the cement drive and go to the back yard and lay the bowl down for Bear, all the while telling him to stay down and not jump and not bite and be a good boy. He was always gentle with her and most of the time would eat all of what she gave him, not like when he left the juicy steak sitting on the plate at Mali's apartment.



Werner in one of his Hawaiiin shirts

Mama Boulgarian always tried to please Werner. One day he came with some Hawaiian shirts I had bought for him and since they had no pockets he took them to Mama and asked her in halting simple English, with lots of hand motions, to sew pockets on for him, taking material from the bottom of the shirt. Beatrice offered to translate for him, but Werner told her to stay out of this discussion, that Mama understood perfectly well what he was telling her. And evidently she did, for when we came next time the shirts all had nice pockets professionally sewn on them.

Werner liked Mama very much and always had very smiling, pleasant discussions with her. She spoke very little English and he spoke no Armenian, no French, and no Italian, so they had no languages in common. But she was very linguistically inclined and they managed to communicate. When Mama went into the Armenian retirement center, Werner would come and visit her and bring her food. She would call him and tell him what she wanted and he would buy it and bring it to her when he could. But she was so far away it was difficult to get over there very often. Just before she died she called him and asked him for some specific food, which he got and put in his trunk for her. But he had been horribly busy that week and was unable to get over and give her the food. Then one day, on December 1st mama decided to go to the grocery store with a friend of hers from the retirement village. As they were crossing a busy street a teenager was driving too fast and was barreling down on them. The friend was able to rush across the street safely, but not mama. She was struck horribly and flew some distance. Almost everything in her body was broken. When Rudi and Beatrice saw her eyes were sunken in and black. Her legs were broken in multiple places. Her ribs were crushed. She remained in a coma for a day and then quietly passed away.



Christopher Pitz

Beatrice called Werner and told him what happened and asked him if we would pick Christopher up from latch key at his school and take him to our house until they could pick him up. She asked me not to take him to the nursing home as she did not want her son to be exposed to the germs there. Werner told me where Chris went to school and asked me to drive over there and pick him up and feed him. I drove over to his school in Troy and asked where the latch key kids were. I was told either in a study room or in a gym next door. I looked in the study room and he wasn't there. I then looked in the gym and saw he was playing basketball with some other kids. I went up to him and told him his parents had called Werner and me and asked me to pick him up as they couldn't get there on time. He had a pensive look on his face but asked no questions. As we started out of the gym he pointed to a book and said I should sign him out there. I did so. I was surprised that no one approached me and asked me, a stranger, why I was taking Chris out. I could have been Jack the Ripper for all they knew. But Chris and I walked out unchallenged. Chris looked funny, which the school should have noticed. He had a frown on his face and was very pensive. I drove him to my mom's house and then we sat down together to a spaghetti dinner. During dinner I explained to him gently that his grandmother had been hit by a car and was in the hospital and that his parents were there with her. Later on they came and picked him up and told me the gruesome details. I knew it would be a miracle if she lived. An unwelcome miracle due to the very grave nature of her very painful injuries.



Werner shooting ducks on Nintendo

Werner used to love to play stuff with Chris and I, especially when Chris got the Nintendo game from his Uncle Berg. Werner used to love to shoot the ducks. Werner would take that gun in his hand, close one eye to look through the scope, then shoot away as the ducks flew across the screen. Werner got most of the ducks most of the time. When he would miss one the duck would pop up from the bottom of the screen, and put his hands over his mouth and laugh at Werner. We all laughed, including Werner, when the duck did that.



Werner holding Bear on his first day with us

When we took Bear home in Werner's car, I rested him on my chest most of the time. It was like having a real live teddy Bear. Both Werner and I said in some respects we wished the dog could remain that size, he was so cute, hanging ears and all. The ears were supposed to come up by about 12 to 14 weeks. They tried to, and eventually the one ear remained up, but the other ear flopped down and stayed down. Stayed down that is, until he was in deep trouble and was running for his life, when the whole posse from the nursing home was after him. Then both ears were stiff up.

Before we got a dog Werner had beautiful perennials in his back yard. He was so proud of his fine garden. He had Calla Lilies which were his favorite as they always bloomed for his mother's birthday. On her birthday he used to pick a bunch and put them in a vase and put them in front of her big picture in the living room. But one funny note. He was allergic to calla lilies and whenever they would bloom he would get pus in the corner of his eyes. He also had variegated lilies and violets. In the side of his house he had many lily of the valley. Those would bloom in late May and he would put them in tin foil and either mail or hand carry them to Mutti for her birthday. Lilly of the valley was her favorite flower as it was her mother's favorite flower. They put lily of the valley on her mother's grave at the funeral. But once we put a dog in our back yard the flowers suffered mightily. After a number of years of the dogs walking across them and digging a fine spot for their resting place, the flowers died. It was such a shame to lose them. But it was either the dog or the flowers and we do love our dogs very much.



Barney



Bear



Ann Kay

Bear met Barney sometime the next spring when Barney was new to his home. That is when I met Ann Kay, my very good neighbor next to Werner's house. Ann thought Barney was about 10 weeks old when she got him and she was counting on him becoming a full sized lab mix. But as is often the case, the shelter bold face lied to Ann in order to get rid of the dog. He was at least 5

months old as he grew very little after she adopted him. She was disappointed in his size but she loved the little guy dearly and called him puppy as he seemed to remain young due to his size. It was in walking our dogs in the neighborhood that we got to know one another as my dog loved Barney and Barney liked Bear. Barney was adopted because Ann's husband Gene wanted him. That was not Ann's choice for a dog but she humored her husband and took Barney home. Barney did not return Gene's affection, in fact, Barney would walk up to him as he lay on the couch and sink his teeth into Gene. Soon after they adopted Barney in the summer of 1985 Gene spit up blood and was diagnosed with lung cancer. They started x ray treatments and soon after, in October of 1985 Ann met me at Werner's fence and told me her husband had just passed away. I hugged her over the fence and gave her my sincere condolences. We soon learned that our neighbor across the street, Maria Loschenkohl also lost her husband the same day as Gene.

After that Ann and I often took our dogs walking together in the wilderness after work and on weekends. How we all enjoyed those walks! We saw so much wildlife in those fields and forests and in the Clinton River. We would sit by the bank of the river and watch the turtles across the river on the far bank. We would see deer tracks and racoon tracks and many types of bird tracks. We saw bunnies and watched Moukie chase a deer for miles and miles, coming back only after she lost track of the deer some 45 minutes later. All of we women would sit on the bank of the river and throw sticks in the river and watch our dogs swim to retrieve them. Moukie was by far the best. She would swim into the swiftest, deepest current and get her stick and bring it back to us. Barney would go in up to his belly and that is as far as he got. If his feet didn't touch bottom he wasn't all that interested in that dumb old stick. Bear would swim sometimes for a stick and other times it scared him in that swift current. Sometimes we would walk over to the island on the far side of that same area and if the tide was low we could walk onto the island. One time we saw 2 deer standing on the island just looking at us. We had to watch out for skunks because sometimes we could smell that they were near by.

Often Ann, Betty and I would go walking in the valley just beyond the big guard rail at the end of the pig plant. One year every time we stood on high ground at the entrance to the valley we would stop and rest and look for the owl's nest in the highest tree in the valley off to the left. If you looked really hard, you could see the pointed ears sticking up out of the top of the nest, which was at the very top of the tree. My favorite part of that valley was the babbling brook just to the right a short distance from the beginning of the valley. We used to sit there and listen to it as the dogs would walk around it or sometimes wade in it. One year we started off in the "Vietnam jungle", then ended up in the valley on the way back. It was in late spring and when we got closer to the end of the valley there in a clearing in the woods we saw a campfire circle and when we got into the campfire area there were a zillion beer and pop bottles. Boy, did we ever scavenge and load up! There was an old beer case which I filled up and there were also some plastic bags which Ann filled up. Talk about strenuous! We had to carry all those heavy bottles through the park, over the guard rail, through the open field, to the school ground and to their south parking lot. At that point I laid the case down and told her to wait there, I would go and get the van.

One time we were sitting on the river bank when as a sudden we heard gun shots close by. Ann decided to give the hunters a scare. When the gun went off she started screaming as though she

had been shot. Suddenly there were no more shots and no hunter to be seen for miles around. We all had a good chuckle over that episode. And we never heard any gunshots again.

Several times we decided to follow the river around the corner from our resting spot and then in a northward direction. It was rough going in a number of places as it was narrow and there was no foot path. One time Ann, I, Barney and Bear walked northward for awhile and then decided to climb a very steep cliff almost straight up to get to the upper paths. Boy, was that ever a scare. First we had to haul Barney up the steep slope and over the lip that curved outward so that we had to reach up and grab the top to pull ourselves over. After Barney we had to get Bear up, and believe you me, was he scared. Several times he would get almost to the top then get very frightened and go back down. And was it ever a problem to get him hauled over the top. He was scared and I thought we weren't going to get him over as he was over 100 lbs and very hard to push over by putting my hand on his butt and giving him one good heave ho! That would have been really nasty to have one dog on top and one on the bottom, which would have happened as there was no way we could have got Barney back down again.

When we would get up the embankment from the river we would have to rest awhile as that was a real climb. First we would have to walk along the high grass by the river. Then we would have to walk over the tree roots at the bank of the river. Then we would have to holler at the dogs as they would jump into the river by the tree and find it was way over their heads and then they would have to swim back. We were always afraid they would get entangled in the tree roots and fallen stumps and not be able to extricate themselves. There was always a multitude of various different animal's foot prints on the bank and around the tree and Bear and Barney would have to sniff out every one of them. After we got away from the river bank we would have to step up onto the post of the fence that had the cement sticking out and then swing ourselves around the fence as the mud had washed out next to the fence. We would then begin our very steep ascent up the steep coal filled hill till we got to the railroad tracks on the top. We would then sit on the railroad tracks and look at the river flow lazily down stream, from north to south. It was such a peaceful sight with all the trees, the grass and the river, and sometimes an animal or too. Once we saw a very mournful goose who had lost his mate. There he sat all alone, making very sad sounds. Our heart went out to him.

On the way back home we would walk the railroad tracks for about 2 blocks with the dogs in the lead. Ann and I would always have a big grin on our face as we watched those 2 hobos sashay their way down the tracks, miraculously being able to place every paw, both front and back on the railroad ties, not stepping on the stones between the cross ties. They always knew where to get off the tracks and amble down the stones and then up the ravine to end up in the west end of the playground. From there we would cross the playground and head home. Poor Bear! All the way across the playground Barney would suddenly look at him real mean with slanted eyes and then charge for the attack. He would hit Bear right in the side of the neck with his teeth. Poor Bear must have had many a bruise under all that fur.

One day as we headed back after a really long walk Bear was pooped. At the entrance to the playground on the east end was a really big, muddy puddle. Bear looked at that puddle, and to him it seemed like pure unadulterated comfort. He ambled over to that puddle and PLOP! He landed right in it and stretched himself out full in there and just looked at us with very contented

eyeballs. Needless to say his mommy had tears in her eyes looking at a dog I just knew was totally plastered in mud on his underside, not to mention all that water dripping off his long fur. And I just knew that when he got home he was going to jump right into bed with his daddy! And he was so close to home that there was no way he was going to dry off any before he got home. Ann still laughs about that episode every time we pass by that area of the playground.



Werner with old Bear

We took Bear with us everywhere. We took him to Morris Brenner's office when we were signing some paperwork. Morrie said in surprised disgust, "What is that beast doing in my office?" Werner's reply? That's not a beast, that's my son! (Maybe Morrie was just getting even for the insult Werner had given to his family a few years back.. Werner came into Morrie's outer office one day and looked with total disgust at the Philippine woman and her half American child sitting in the outer office. Werner said to the secretary, "What's that off breed woman with her half breed child doing in this office?" The secretary replied in a hushed tone of voice usually reserved for church, "That's Mr. Brenner's son's wife and Morrie's grandchild". All the rest of us would have turned red in the face and said something like "OOPS!" Not Werner. Aw, @#%*& Jews don't marry half breeds! His son must be a bigger loser than I thought. Well we brought Bear with us into Morrie's conference room. Watch that that beast doesn't do anything was Morrie's admonition. We all passed the papers around and began signing them. Then we passed them to Morrie to notarize. Morrie put his hand down and shook his fingers before signing. Bear was right at Morrie's side and when he saw the fingers shake he lunged forward and went "SNAP!!" just as Morrie pulled his fingers away from the jaws. Bear missed chomping his hand by a fraction of an inch. Morrie didn't even notice! Then Morris went into his main office to get something and as soon as he left the conference room Bear decided the new carpet was the wrong color, that it needed a substantial amount of yellow added to it, which he generously provided. Morris never noticed that either.

Morris was a brilliant attorney and he always served Werner in good stead. Werner said that Morris' real estate paperwork always stood in good stead. He never had a problem with anything Morris created. Morris was also one of Werner's nursing home attorneys, having done business with many other nursing home owners, he was quite knowledgeable in that area. But all of us nursing home owners were badly shaken when one day the attorney general's office came storming into Morris' office and confiscated all of his files on select nursing home owners whom

they were investigating. Now we knew that the attorney's office was no longer considered to be a safe depository for legal paperwork. Morris said he learned a lesson from that. He now kept all sensitive paperwork in a separate file under his desk with no client's name on it. Morris had two sons who were attorneys but they were total failures. They were unable to conduct any legal business on their own. They had to consult Morris on everything, Morris ended up using Ron as a secretary, but he really wasn't competent to handle that job either. Ron ended up building all the wood book cases in Morris's office and when Morris retired his lawyer son went into carpentry, his first love. The sons in this case were no reflection of the father.

Morris was like a father figure to both Werner and me. He was always a gentleman out of the old school. He made you feel at home in his office. He had two statues in his bookcase I got a kick out of. One of them said, "Sue the bastards". Another said that for an attorney time is money. Money was something Morrie and Werner used to fight over regularly. Werner said Morris gets too creative with his bills, especially as he got older. He said Morris would try to keep you on the phone forever to run up billable hours and then he would research a project to death to again increase billable hours. I remember Werner telling me that he told Morrie, forget the chit chat social niceties. That costs me money. Let's get right down to the problem at hand and then get off the phone to keep my bill down. The last bill of Werner's life that was not paid at the time of his death was re-negotiated downward upon a discussion between Werner and Morris. Morris then sent me a new bill for the original full amount which I paid before I found the renegotiated bill.

One time in 1985 Werner was extremely abusive to me and I had to fly out of there as I was really upset. The worker uprising had Werner in an uproar and being he couldn't holler at them he took all his anger out on me. I was so upset. I didn't know where to turn. I refused to be abused like that again, and yet I loved Werner dearly and had no intention of ever leaving him. But what to do? Suddenly it came to me. I just got into my car and drove as fast as I could to Morrie's office and showed up there without an appointment. He saw me right away. I sat down in his office and explained how Werner had just flown totally off the wall screaming and hollering and calling me horrible things and that I did nothing to deserve such treatment. This had to end and I didn't know what to do about it, did not want to leave Werner and was afraid to go back to him given what had just transpired. Morrie said he would talk to Werner and that I should stay away from Werner's till about 7:30 pm, then go back home. As I was leaving the office I heard Morrie on the phone. "Werner, this is Morrie. Sandy was just in my office. Get down here, now!" I went home at 7:30 pm to a very humbled Werner. I asked him what Morrie had said to him. Werner replied that he did not want to talk about it. Later on Werner told me that Morrie had said to him, "Werner, Sandy is just a girl. We don't talk to girls that way".

Morrie's practice dwindled over time. The last year of his full practice seemed to be about 1984. It was that year that he picked up Mali for a client as Mali always rode Werner's coat tails, using whomever Werner used for business purposes. As other clients diminished, Mali took on a greater significance. First Morris gave up his secretary, using Ron instead. Then he let Ron handle some of his business with disastrous results. Then he gave up his office and worked out of his home after he lost his beloved wife of many years.



Kurt Wilhelm, Werner Wilhelm and Gerti Nael Wilhelm

Werner met Morris in Henry Ford hospital. Werner was down there admitting Uncle Kurt and he met a very distraught Morris in the hall. Morris' wife just had a triple bypass and was doing very poorly. He was afraid for her life, and right after that he transferred her to Beaumont where she soon died. Werner had comforted his good friend as best as he could in that hallway. Not too much later Werner died and the first New Year's eve after his death a very distraught crying Morrie was on the phone to me. I took the call in Werner's little office. It turned out that the check I had mailed him was not signed and had two different amounts on it and he was frantic as his son needed the money to pay his utility bills. It was definitely something that I had done under Werner's heavy hand as I felt him right on top of me as I was writing the check. I was in a state of trance almost, barely seeing the check in front of me. And at the bank Werner showed up in front of Morrie and made him literally fall all to pieces. That was a very emotional moment for both Morrie and me. I don't know if Morrie understood Werner's visitation at that point or not.



Bear & Werner Wilhelm



Bear 1984

We also took Bear to Noel Keene's office when we were looking through his books picking out a surrogate. Bear was just a little guy, fitting nicely in my arms. I carried him in and put him next to me. What is that beast doing in here, Noel asked Werner. That is my son, Werner said as I held him child like in my arms. Noel then looked at the dog and me and said, "yes, I know what you mean. For a long time me and my wife were unable to have children so we got the dog as a substitute for a child. One day I was sitting on the sofa in the living room with the dog in my arms rocking him, when suddenly I asked myself why I was doing that. I felt so stupid rocking the dog when I thought about it. Then I realized that the dog was a substitute for the child we never had. That is when my wife and I tackled our fertility problems in earnest and we ended up having a family of our own." We later interviewed a tall thin intelligent surrogate from Indiana but she was hypercritical of Werner's health due to his weight and wanted to know who would raise the child if we died. Werner decided not to use this woman although she was willing to work with us. Another woman wanted to be with the child exclusively for 1 week after it was born. That was far too dangerous of a possibility of a custody dispute to suit me. Then there was a highly intelligent social worker from Ohio. She had a real high IQ, many people in her family had high IQs and she said she gets pregnant easily. On top of that she had the same blood type as me. But for some unknown reason that didn't please Werner.

When Keene borrowed the money from Werner he had both he and his wife sign for personal liability. Brenner made up the paperwork and Keene was supposed to pay Brenner for his time. Keene bought the land out from under the State of Michigan and then later got a loan to pay off Werner for the down payment money. Keene paid back Werner plus interest but he refused to pay Brenner, saying Brenner owed him professional courtesy. Brenner was upset and tried to collect from Werner as he said he knew nothing of Keene except what he read in the newspapers.

One day Noel called Werner and said a German newspaper, Der Stern, wanted to interview some of Keene's clients for their newspaper. He asked if we would meet these newspaper reporters. Werner agreed providing they would not know our real names as he did not want his sister reading about him in the German newspaper as she knew nothing about the surrogate situation. Werner told them we would meet them for dinner, which we paid for, at the top of the Holiday Inn in Southfield, at 12 Mile and Telegraph. We arrived at this nice restaurant and soon met the newspaper reporters. Werner was totally disgusted with their dress – raggedy tops and old jeans. And their attitude was punk like in demeanor. The night was fraught with tension on both sides as we did not fit together at all. And Werner told me to call him Richard, his first name. He got

mad when I slipped and called him Vern. I don't know if that story ever got printed or not as we never saw a copy of it.



Trully Bear & Werner

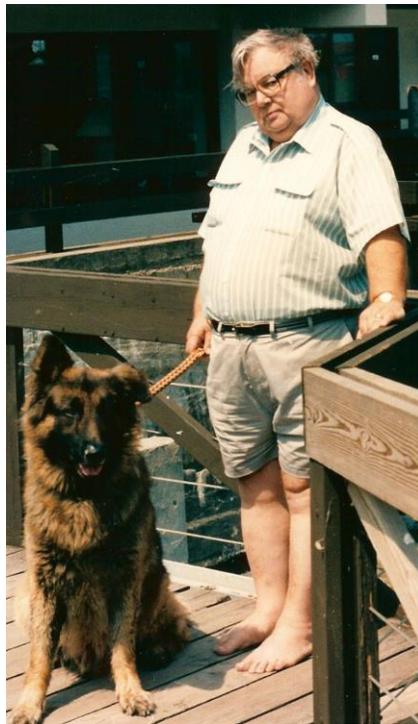


Old Bear

Bear had many health problems throughout his short 7 years of life. Both he and Trully Bear had significant pain in their fore paws while growing. Bear would lunge at you and lightly bite you if you ever tried to touch his front paws. This lasted throughout his entire life time. He never wanted to eat. Meal time was a major hassle. He would run away and try to hide when you tried to feed him. You had to mix dry and moist dog food together, and then hand feed him while chasing him around the house and singing to him. I finally turned the job over to Edna as it was too time consuming and too nerve wracking. Werner used to call Whistledown the ears down, balls up kennel, because Bear's second ear never came up and his testicles never descended. Then we discovered that Bear was severely thyroid deficient so we had to get him to swallow 6 to 7 thyroid pills every day as a dog's thyroid needs are much greater than a humans. Then he had a problem in which he would regurgitate food, which the vet thought he might have a pocket in his throat where food got stuck. Imagine the total frustration of finally getting a dog to eat, then he upchucks the food!

Bear's first major trauma occurred at my mom's house. We were over there for supper and afterwards I walked him around the block, down to Hahn, over to Engel, south on Engel to Mc Clellan and then as we were passing Snoor's house a Shepherd who was visiting jumped the short fence as she was snarling and hissing like a snake at Bear, then she attacked Bear, repeatedly biting him in the chest. I couldn't get her teeth out of Bear and screamed for help from the Snoor boy. He came out and held her collar as I held Bear. I took the leash off Bear and started hitting their dog in the head with the leash. She finally let go of Bear and I took him home. The next day he was very seriously ill, in fact he was almost totally collapsed. I took him to the vet who said he had a serious infection from the bites. She gave him shots and pills and he did recover. She said bites in that area of the chest are very serious as they are near a large blood supply and infections there get right into the blood stream.

The second major trauma to my nerves also occurred at my mom's house. I brought Bear with me in the dead of winter while I had supper at mom's house. Bear wanted out to go potty. I let him out the back door. There was no fence in those days, I fenced in the back yard later. When Bear was through going potty he would come to mom's front door and I would let him in again, When I opened the front door, no Bear. I went all around the property calling his name, no Bear. I went all around the neighborhood calling for him, no Bear. I called Werner in a total panic that Bear was missing. Werner, very mellow sounding, was totally unconcerned, which was not at all like him as he cherished Bear. The reason for his nonchalance? Bear was laying in bed with him, nice and warm and comfy with his daddy! He had walked all the way back to Werner's across Van Dyke all by himself. When he arrived at Werner's he could barely walk due to ice balls in his paw pads. Werner removed those for him and then they cuddled up together, all warm and comfy like. While mommy was about to go out of her mind with fear. Werner, didn't you ever hear of using a telephone to call Sandy and tell her you had the dog? Just another day at the circus!



Bear & Werner

Another Bear – Werner story that was hilarious being all's well that ends well – Werner decided to take a walk with Bear and me after dark. We went down Cass Ave about ½ mile, then turned around and began our trek home. Werner was really upset with Bear by this time as Bear spent the whole time on the walk engrossed in tantalizing scents, first on this side of the pavement, then on the other. He weaved back and forth in front of Werner and me until Werner had enough with that dog almost tripping him on the leash a half dozen times. Gimme that leash! Werner bellowed. I'll show that dog how to walk in a straight line. So I gave him the leash, worried about what the outcome would be. I didn't have to worry for very long. At the Webb residence a 12 lb Pomeranian pooch came charging out of their back yard and in the deep dark of the night, started attacking Bear in earnest, biting all four of Bears' paws, continuously running around Bear and biting him. Bear was looking all over the place with a "where did he go, where did he go!"

look on his face as he twisted and turned everywhere trying to fix a bead on that darn dog. Then the Pomeranian flew back into his backyard with a flash. Bear saw him go and started after him with a huge lunge. While Bear was chasing the Pomeranian he had wrapped the leash totally around Werner's legs and now that he lunged straight forward, Werner was going over like a huge log. I was holding Werner upright with one arm and trying to release Bear's leash with the other hand. I did manage to release the leash which was almost impossible as he was pulling so hard against it. And I did just barely manage to keep Werner upright. I didn't hear another thing about how he could handle that dog better than me all the way home as I now once again had the leash fast in my hand and Bear was once again sniffing back and forth across the sidewalk like a bloodhound. The silence was deafening.



Werner & Bear by Wil Mar

On Easter Sunday of 1986 Uncle Kurt was with us and it was such a beautiful day that Werner and I and Kurt decided to take Bear for a walk up Cass Ave. We went to the cemetery and then turned around to walk back home. When we were in front of the car dealer's property Werner suddenly unleashed Bear and had me go backwards one block and then we exercised Bear by first one of us calling him and then the other. He would run back and forth between us, according to who was calling him. We did this a number of times to exercise Bear without knocking the wind out of the rest of us. Bear and Werner were very happy that day. We have some very lovely pictures of Werner with truly Bear, his first German Shepherd, on an earlier Easter Sunday standing in front of the magnolia tree in front of Wil Mar.



Werner & Bear in Falling Waters, Leland

Werner took little Bear to Leland to the Falling Waters motel for a weekend vacation. We would take Bear to Lake Michigan and let him run along the sand and play with the other dogs on the beach. He would run back and forth, kicking up sand along the way. In the meantime Werner saw a 12 year old boy fishing down at the end at the mouth of the canal that lead to the falling waters. Werner never had time to fish and had never even owned a fishing license, but this time he got the urge to fish so he went up to the boy and offered him \$5 if he could hold the kid's fishing pole in the water for awhile. They made the deal and the kid pocketed the money and Werner sat there on the rocks with the fancy fishing pole in the water. It was less than 10 minutes when Werner started making some big excitements – he had snagged a fish on this line! He hauled it in and I couldn't believe my eyes – it was a really big fish. The largest one I had ever seen in real life. He got the fish off the line, gave the kid his fishing pole back and started off for the car with the fish in his hand. I took several pictures of him holding this fish. Little Bear just stood there in front of Werner sniffing the fish, but he never tried to bite into it. Werner drove that fish home in the trunk of his car then put it in his outdoor freezer in the garage. It remained there uneaten until after his death, when I cleaned out the freezer and threw away the fish.

After Falling Waters in Leland we took Bear to Werner's 1600 acres in Barbeau. Bear loved it there. He walked with me as I walked the road and the paths. Bear always stayed rather close to me as that property was teeming with wildlife, including Bear and some of those smells were frightening to a dog. One time Werner had me walk in the woods with two local men to see if we could find Deer Lake. It turned out that the beavers that the DNR had put on Werner's property had totally chewed through our expensive macadam road and used the logs to build a dam next to the old road. The dam made a new lake and also totally flooded out where the road used to be. We walked beyond that area but then we all got concerned because we could not find the rest of the road and all was tall flowing grass and even the local men were afraid of not finding the entrance to the pond and the existing road we had just come on. And as we turned around I would have taken the wrong path but Bear went right to the path we had just come through and would have lead us back to safety.



Werner & little Bear in Houghton Lake

We also took little Bear to Houghton Lake that year. I had made reservations on my credit card for a motel that Werner was familiar with, but when we got up there they had not kept our

reservation and were full. Luckily I found another room in a mom and pop cottage complex down the road. It was a knotty pine cottage and quite nice. Bear loved running into the water the next day. But we had one bad experience at the Holiday Inn restaurant on the other end. I ordered the \$10 buffet but Werner who was not feeling well just ordered a small dinner. Ribs were part of the buffet, and I took 4 or 5 of them on my plate. I ate all the meat off the ribs and then Werner took the rib bones off my plate and ate the whole bones. (He often ate rib and chicken bones, crunching them into pieces with his very strong teeth and then swallowing the crunched up pieces.) Well the manager of the restaurant said Werner was sharing the buffet and wanted to charge him the whole \$10 too. Well a big loud fight ensued and the manager called the police. The police listened to both sides of the story and decided Werner should pay \$7, which he did, but not happily. Those were some mighty expensive rib bones, considering that they did not have any meat on them when Werner crunched them up.

There was also a sad story attached to this visit to Houghton Lake. There was a man in his late 50s who had developed heart problems and he needed to go to the Detroit area for open heart surgery. He needed to sell his marina in order to finance his medical bills and also because he was now too ill to do the heavy work anymore. Werner was interested in buying the marina and struck a deal with the guy to buy the marina for a set price and Werner said he would also provide the guy with Blue Cross from St. Anne's to cover his medical costs. The deal never was consummated and the man was very upset with Werner. He said that Werner should never had lead a man in his condition on like that.



Bear II

Werner and I took a pontoon boat ride a short distance on Houghton Lake. Bear was with us and he was none too sure about being on such a rocky surface. Another time Don Noyes, a friend Werner met when he went on that Chamber of Commerce trip to the Caribbean Islands, took us on a boat ride on his fine big boat. But he would not let Bear on the boat so we left Bear in the Cadillac while we went sailing. It was a gorgeous boat but Werner and I figured it must have cost him a fortune in gas to run that thing around the Detroit river. He had all the latest gadgets on that boat which Werner found interesting. Werner used to own a 30 foot cabin cruiser which he had docked at the Detroit Yacht Club, so being on the boat again was a very pleasant experience for him. When we got back I let Bear out of the car to roam around and go potty. He then ran out on the dock and greeted Werner. I then playfully threw Bear off the dock, figuring it to be 4 or 5 feet deep there. Real bad move. I felt just horrible and very frightened. Bear went down and down and down and down. It was extremely deep there and I thought Bear would never

come back up. But he did and then swam to shore where Werner helped him out of the water. After that Bear never much liked the water, trying never to go in to the point where his feet wouldn't touch bottom. But when he was in too deep he did swim okay, not like Mopsy, who sunk into the bottom of the swimming pool head and shoulders first and never did come back up, at least that is, his nose never came back up. Rather his tail and his hind end came up for air, but he wasn't able to breathe too good from that end. I had to pull him up by his harness to save him.



Barney Kay & Bear Wilhelm

A funny Barney and Bear story. Ann and I were on our way to a mousing expedition in the wilderness with Barney and Bear. After we crossed the huge grounds behind Eppler Junior High School we decided to go part way through the vacant field, then we went down the big hill and back up the hill to the railroad tracks. We all 4 then walked down the tracks toward the pig plant, then we planned to go through the second guard rail and into the Vietnam jungle, as Dinora called it the one time we walked that area together. Anyways, Barney and Bear got way ahead of Ann and I, something that worried us as we wanted to be able to control the dogs if something untold came up, so just as we were about to call them back at least half way to us, a very derelict looking man came out of the wilderness and walked up on the railroad tracks heading toward the dogs and us. He was quite close to the dogs and Ann and I were very concerned about what would happen next. Evidently the dogs were too for as a sudden they turned around and as fast as their little 4 paws could carry them, they hot footed it down the railroad tracks right back to Ann and me. Evidently those two little varmints were more afraid of the bum than the bum was of them for they lickety split went behind Ann and I and when they were totally behind us both of them peeked out from behind our skirts to see what we were going to do about the bum. Those two were scared to death of the guy and being dogs and protection normally go together, they were wondering what Ann and I were going to do to protect our two dogs!



Ann Kay



Barney Kay



Bear Wilhelm

Every time our two dogs walked down the railroad tracks in front of us Ann and I had to smile at them for they looked like two hobos with knapsacks on their backs running away from home. Somehow they managed to continually keep all 4 of their paws on the railroad ties and not step on the rip stones between the ties. I always wondered how they were able to do that being they couldn't see where they were stepping.



Werner in bed

Ann and I loved our dogs with all our hearts and we had the best times of our lives walking our dogs in the wilderness. And I would be so full of joy and happiness and so wonderfully tired out when Bear and I would return to Werner who would be resting in his bed and we would relate to Werner all the fun things we did while together in the wilderness. Werner would vicariously enjoy our adventures. Werner's heart was never strong enough to take those journeys with me, although he did twice in our years together.



Barney & Bear

One time when we were just about out of the wilderness we were all at the curve of the river and we had to climb the 4 story high very steep embankment to the railroad tracks. Ann and I would hug the fence post to get around the fence and then drop down onto the drier part of the mud. We would then walk along the river and then begin our steep climb up the embankment. The dogs would normally stay behind for one last dunk and swim in the neighboring curve of the river before joining us in the climb to the railroad tracks. Ann and I would then stand at the tracks and call the dogs, often repeatedly as they loved the river and were very reluctant to leave their favorite mud hole. This one time Barney then flew up the embankment, ears straight back in the wind and then when he got to the top he would turn around and watch Bear come out of the water and make his somewhat more laborious climb up the hill. Well, it didn't take a Rhodes

Scholar to figure out that Barney was up to pure dirt that afternoon. And Bear had his hang dog look on his face at that point knowing he was about to become the butt of one of Barney's dirty tricks. Bear was $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up the hill when all of a sudden Barney charges full tilt down the hill, smashes Bear solid in the body and sends Bear ass over tea kettle back down the hill. I was really worried for Bear's safety as he took a long head over heels repeated summersault down that hill and almost landed into the deep swift running part of the river. Barney was not one bit repentant.

That portion of the river was our very favorite spot. We often sat on the banks and threw sticks for the dogs for a long time. And every time we went there the look was different. The wilderness was forever changing, forever different appearing. The wild flowers were breath taking there. Every week something would be fading away and a new batch of different flowers would be appearing. The trillium and the Jack in the Pulpit were our favorites. We were admonished never to pick the flowers as some of them like the Jack in the Pulpit were quite rare. And year to year the rare flowers never appeared in the same places. I would always come home to Werner and tell him what was now growing where.

One time the ice dammed up on the north side of our favorite side of the river and lay in huge sheets, one partially on top of the other. It was a beautiful sight, but it only occurred once in the 20 years we went there. Likewise the snapping turtles were there for one season and then were not seen there again. We were afraid the turtles would pull Moukie under water when she swam across the river after them but fortunately they never hurt her. Also one summer the owl was high up in his perch in the highest part of the highest tree at the entrance to the wide field just in from the first guard rail, but after that year he was never seen from again. It was such a thrill that year to repeatedly stop there on the crest of the hill and see the owls' ears sticking out of his nest in the big tree in the valley. In warm weather I would take off my shoes, roll up my pant legs and wade into the bank of the river retrieving sticks to throw to the dogs. Bear would swim to get a stick, Barney would not. I was always afraid to have Bear swim into a swift moving part of the river for fear the current or the debris in the river would pull him under. Moukie was a powerful swimmer and nothing would deter her from a safe swim.



Kurt Wilhelm & Bear

Uncle Kurt used to like to tease Bear. He would lay in bed at the blue house upstairs and make cat noises when Bear was in the dining room with me. Bear would go nuts looking for the cat as he hated cats. He never could find that cat and I would hear Kurt wheezing with laughter. And Kurt and the dog in the back seat of Werner's Cadillac was also a production. Bear would challenge Kurt about taking half of his back seat, but would soon settle down. When I went along Werner and I would sit in the front seat, and before I got in the car, Werner would hold the passenger seat front seat back forward and say to Kurt and Bear, "alle Hunde hinten ein!" which meant "all dogs in the back seat!" Kurt and the dog would then jump in. I and Werner would get in the front seat and off we'd go. Soon we would hear little noises in the back as Kurt was trying to sneakily tease Bear while we weren't looking. When Bear would have enough he would reach over and nip Kurt. That was what Kurt was waiting for. He would holler as loud as he could that Bear bit him. Just another game .



Edna Smith, Sandy Wilhelm & Bear Wilhelm

One funny Bear story. It was the dead of winter and Edna and I were in my brand new tan van and Bear was with us. We stopped at Americana restaurant to eat and left Bear in the car. Bear went and sat in the driver's seat waiting for us to return. If he got too impatient when sitting in the driver's seat he would always honk the horn for us by turning around and sitting his butt on the horn. This one time he was sitting up there as nice as you please when an identical van pulled up next to mine and a husband and wife got out. The man looked at my van and told the woman to go over and ask the lady in the fur coat how she liked her new van. So the lady, looking down at all the ice on the pavement slipped and slid her way over to my van and then started asking the "lady" how she liked her van. As she finished her sentence and looked up at him she was shocked out of her mind to be staring face to face with a dog! Her husband came around and she told him with a mirthful but shocked tone of voice, that lady with the fur coat you asked me to talk to – it a big dog! They both laughed and went into the restaurant. When they came back out we came out at the same time and they told us about talking to Bear, thinking it was a woman in a fur coat. We had left the restaurant a little earlier than we expected to because it was very cold out and Bear was beeping to horn for us with his rear end.



Bear

Another funny Bear story. Again it was very cold out, we had Bear in the car with us and we stopped at the restaurant again to eat. We both agreed we would eat fast and get home as it was so very bitter cold out and we didn't want to leave Bear in the car any longer than necessary. So we told the waitress we were in a hurry and we got our food fairly fast. After we ate Edna said in loud voice that we had better get out of the restaurant because we had left our baby in the car. As soon as she said that a couple who was eating in the restaurant popped up out of their seats and ran out into the parking lot and went from car to car looking for the baby who was left alone, no doubt to turn us in to the authorities. After checking all the cars they came in perplexed and disappointed because they were unable to locate the infant. All eyes were on us as we got into our car and pulled out of the parking lot!



Bear in front of tan mini van

Another time someone approached us in Sebring because we had Bear tied to the side door of the van. They said he was all tangled up in his rope and we shouldn't leave him tied up. But we had a dilemma there as it was very hot outside so we couldn't leave him in the car and the restaurant will not allow you to bring the dog in. So we ate with one eye on the dog and I had to go out 2 or 3 times to untangle the dog when he wound his rope around everywhere. Another time in Florida just off the I 94 X way near Naples we tied him to a tree while we went in to eat. I had to go out and tend to him too and then give him lots of water to quench his thirst.

We stayed over night with Bear in the Knights Inn. I went swimming that night, then went to bed. The next morning I got the surprise of my life. I got a horrible, unbelievable cramp in the back of my thigh. It was painful beyond endurance. Nothing would end that cramp. I held my leg and screamed in pain. Werner told me to shut up, what would the people think. I screamed some more. He said in his sternest voice to shut up, people would think he was beating me. I could care less what people thought, I hurt beyond endurance. Finally, after an eternity, the pain

left. But my leg had a residue of the cramp for several days after that. Poor Bear couldn't figure out why I was screaming.



Kurt Wilhelm

Uncle Kurt used to get the Charlie Horses in his chest wall as he tried to get in the back seat of Werner's 2 door Cadillac. He would stand there on the pavement holding his side, hollering OWWW!! It was probably due to lack of proper circulation due to his bad heart.

After that we went to the Registry hotel, a high class resort hotel in Pelican Bay with Bear. Now, this presented a problem as dogs were not allowed in this hotel. So Werner got a brilliant idea. He would pretend Bear was a guide dog. So Werner grabbed Bear's leash short and walked through the lobby pretending he was blind and Bear was leading him. Yah, sure. Trouble was Bear had two dog obedience classes and both Bear and me flunked both times. Bear was all over that lobby, then Werner almost tripped and fell over the dog as he cut at the last minute right in front of Werner. Then Werner finally got to the counter, introduced Bear as a guide dog, and started to register. The girl filled out the card for him and then I tried so hard not to double over in laughter when she took Werner's hand and guided it to where he was supposed to sign on the card. Werner was stunned and almost pulled his hand away as he did not at first comprehend when she did this. He could see perfectly well where to sign until it sunk in that if you are blind, then you cannot see.

Another seeing eye dog incident occurred at the Utica Dairy Queen. Werner decided to take Bear in there for an ice cream. They promptly told him no dogs allowed in the ice cream parlor. He told them Bear was a seeing eye dog and sat down in a booth around the corner from the ordering counter. They were murmuring to themselves that that didn't look like no seeing eye dog to them, but they let it go despite their dubiousness. Werner sat there with Bear and I got him and Bear their ice cream. We ate and left, with the staff staring at us with dirty looks the entire time.



Bear



Barney

One thing Bear adored was to go for a walk with Barney in the total wilderness of the DNR land behind us. Bear lived for that walk. It was like dying and going to heaven for both him and me. We used to ask him if he wanted to go mousing, a term which we used for that walk because Barney (alias Puppy) Kay used to find a mouse hole, jump up in the air and then go straight down with his nose in the hole and up he would come with a mouse in his mouth! Bear and Barney were the best of friends. They loved to go on that walk together. They would go through all those deep woods sniffing the various strange animal scents along the way. And when they got to the big hill Barney would run down the hill as fast as his legs would carry him, and then Bear would walk down the hill after him. Barney would turn around, and look at Bear with slit eyes and then attack Bear big time about 3/4s of the way down the hill. Poor Bear! He would turn his head sideways and have a woe begone look on his face, but he would never attack Barney back. Barney was his best friend, and he respected that. He could have killed Barney with his 110 lb strength, but he would never hurt him. One time Moukie went with us, along with her mommy Betty. For some reason Bear couldn't stand Moukie, probably because he met her right after a disgusting German Shepherd ripped him up and he was still suffering from his wounds. But anyways when Moukie tried to go along for the walk Bear would attack her and route her away from the rest of us, including her mommy Betty. Moukie felt awful about what Bear was doing to her. She then walked up ahead of us along the dirt path that followed the Clinton River. As Moukie walked you could see her body stiffen as she got madder and madder at what Bear had done to her. Finally she had enough, turned around and went charging after Bear. She knocked him one real good and he went flying off the path into the deep, swift running current section of the Clinton River. Boy, was he scared. He clung tenuously to the bank of the river and couldn't get back up the 4 foot high embankment. I was hysterical with fear. He was too far down for me to grab him. Ann laid on her belly, reached way down, grabbed his collar, doubled the collar up so she could get a good safe grip on him, then pulled him up out of the water by his collar. Boy, were we and Bear ever grateful! When I told Werner this story he wasn't too upset, but he would have been if he had seen it.



Honda Hatchback

Bear would go anywhere with me. Whenever I had an errand to go to I would take Bear with me. At first he rode in the Honda hatchback, but as he attained his full growth his ears would be smashed flat against the top of the back seat of the car.



Bear outside of the tan van

Then Werner decided to give me \$3000 toward the cost of a new van. The reason he gave me the \$3000 is that I was ordering the van from scratch to save lots of money and I was going to order it with a stick shift and no air conditioning. Werner told me to order both and I said no way, I wasn't going to pay for such frills. Werner realized he would be riding in the van often, so he broke down and put in the cost of both. The van was perfect for Bear and me. He rode in the back seat most of the time, all the way back on the second bench and I often took out the first bench to haul things. I used to look all the way back at him sitting way back there and I had to smile as whenever we would hit a bump he would pop out of his seat and fly a bit into the air and then land back on his seat again, just like kids riding on a school bus. I used to therefore call him the school bus kid.

Bear would sit in the van for a long time, but there was a limit to his patience in the car. First he would sit in the driver's seat, then he would turn himself around in the seat and use his fanny to blow the van's horn. If we did not respond within 5 minutes he would turn around and blow it again. The people in the restaurants would get a big kick out of Bear getting our attention in this way. But if we did not respond the next thing he would do was downright dangerous. He would then try to climb out of the van and come get us. We used to keep the window a little less than half way down to keep him in and when he decided to get out of this window it was downright dangerous as he would often get stuck half way out. Once Werner and I were at a golf course getting financial information on a deal Werner was interested in. Bear blew the horn but we ignored him as we were engaged in financial arrangements. When he got tired of blowing the horn he decided to get out of the car and come find us. He then wiggled his front half of his body out of the window and then he got his back half stuck on the window and he was hanging head down from the driver's side window, stuck by his ham hocks. A kindly golfer ran over and was in the process of extricating him from the window when I ran out to help. I needed this man's assistance in getting him off that window as Bear weighed 110 lbs, so he was too heavy for me to handle by myself.

Another time Bear was half out of the window at the Uptown restaurant and I had to run out to save him so he wouldn't end up running out into Van Dyke. I pushed him back in and rolled up the window a little more.



Bear inside Werner's Cadillac

We took Bear with us to Sun N Lake Towers when we bought it. Bear liked it there, although it was too hot during the day for him. Bear used to ride down there in my car. The first time we took him down it was in Werner's car. When we stopped at a very narrow rest stop in Tennessee Werner wanted me to let Bear off leash! Werner was nuts! The highway was only 5 feet away and on the other end a short distance away there was a sheer drop off of over 100 feet. I never did figure out what possessed Werner to say that!



Lotta Dassler in my brown mini van

Another time when I was driving with a 4000 lb trailer behind my brown van and Bear was in the car with me I was real scared because I had to pull this trailer up the very steep mountain at Jellico Tennessee and I was very scared that the van wouldn't make it, especially since the engine was going bad again. As we were climbing slow and very laborious, Bear must have sensed or smelled my fear and then he looked out of the passenger side window on the sliding door and when he saw that sheer drop off into the valley far, far below us, he let out a "OWWW! OWWW! OOWWW! But we made it up the hill and all the way to daddy in Sebring.



Sun 'N Lake Towers

Werner first learned of Sun N Lake Towers, which was originally named Fairway Pines from a Real Estate agent on the Gulf side of Florida in about 1988. Werner was alone in Florida at the time and dropped into this real estate office to see if there were any good nursing homes for sale. The idea of a retirement center with 228 apartment units for \$3 Million interested Werner so the real estate agent drove Werner over to Sebring, Florida to look at the complex. Werner was very impressed. It was only 3 years old, appeared to be in very good condition, was built for slightly over \$7 Million and was now in bankruptcy court and was going for less than half the construction cost. At the present occupancy of about 38 units they were unable to pay their bills and were making no principal or interest payments to the bond holders. This was a disaster to many of the bondholders as most of them were local retirees who could not afford the loss of this principal at this time in their lives.

Werner went over the figures given to him by the real estate and by the Savings and Loan company holding Fairway Pines and he felt it would be a profitable deal if he could get over 100 units rented and would be a virtual gold mine if he could get the majority of the 228 units filled. So Werner put in a bid of \$3 Million for Fairway Pines. It went into the Savings and Loan committee for possible acceptance. Werner and I traveled to Orlando and Werner met with the savings and loan officers while I remained behind in the parking lot walking Bear around. After Werner conducted his business and presented the paperwork he and I stopped in the Steak and Shake restaurant next door and had lunch together. Werner felt quite confident about this prospective purchase. This proposal stalled in committee for the longest time and then when Werner was back at Wil Mar he heard that the Savings and Loan holding Fairway Pines went bankrupt and that no decision had been made about his purchase offer. When the Fairway Pines was assigned to the SFLIC (the insurance company for the defunct Savings and Loan) Werner then followed up on the status of his offer to purchase. They said that they had received so many failed Savings and Loans with so many failed properties that it would take them quite a while to sort them all out. So Werner waited and waited and called and called and no action seemed to be forthcoming. Over a whole year had passed and then Werner read in the Wall Street Journal that the SFLIC itself went under and all the failed Savings and Loans were now being handled by the FDIC, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, an insurance company formed after the Great Depression of 1929 to insure defunct banks. So no Werner contacted the FDIC and they said they would take his offer to purchase under advisement. Again, a lot of waiting and no answer. Werner demanded an answer. None was forthcoming. So Werner hired an attorney and sued to purchase the Fairway Pines, stating in his suit that his was the only offer to purchase and had been stalled for better than a year. Werner prevailed. The court ordered the FDIC to sell Werner Fairway Pines for \$3 million.

Werner was then given a meeting with the FDIC on Peachtree Street in a high rise in Orlando, Florida to iron out the details. This meeting Werner said I had to attend as he said that they were no doubt going to be a very hostile crowd and he needed emotional support and backing. SO I went with him into an office that had a spectacular view of downtown Atlanta, Georgia. Werner was right, these guys were super hostile in the extreme, in other words, they were very sore losers. Some of the details were worked out but I felt that this meeting was mostly one of bristly hides and antagonistic anger. The real details were worked out later between Werner and his attorney in Florida.

Closing day for Fairway Pines was a real fiasco. Werner's attorney in Sebring, Florida, Mr Lobo, was in charge of working out all the details of the transaction, and being he was not a tax attorney he blew it when it came to the wording for the new corporation to be. Due to the working error a proper corporation for the new entity had not been set up. Werner had his attorney request a delay in the closing date so the needed corporation could be created. The attorneys for the FDIC said absolutely not, they had to close tomorrow or the deal was permanently off. Werner called Steve Feldman in Michigan and asked him to salvage the deal. Steve said he could not pull a new corporation out of his hat and set up paperwork for it in a few hours. So the only way Steve was able to make the deal go forward was to have Werner purchase the property in his own name rather than in a corporate name. That was a real risk as it left Werner open to personal liability should anything go wrong with the new entity. That made my blood run cold as I knew all the unbelievable many things that could go wrong when running a facility. Werner was HOT!!! Really HOT!!! He spent hours and hours screaming obscenities at his attorney Lobo, telling him how stupid and incompetent he was. Steve Feldman heard all this screaming over the open line and said to himself, "Boy, I'm glad its not me he's screaming at!"

With Steve's help the deal was packaged together as best as possible under the circumstances and the next day Werner became the proud owner of Fairway Pines. Before purchasing it Werner persuaded the managers of Fairway Pines, Minton Cooper and his son, to let us move in and get a feel for the place before we took over. Minton and his son had high hopes of being able to continue to manage the place after Werner purchased it. Werner didn't make any verbal commitment one way or another but I knew that was no way on God's green earth that Werner would keep on hand managers who did nothing to increase the census and who were stationed in Melbourne and who seldom were on the premises.



Steve from C tower

One bad mistake that the Coopers made was to not evict Steve, a real big mouth trouble maker who spent all of his time running around stirring up the tenants unrest. The secretary moved Steve to the C building to try to keep him away from the higher class tenants in the A and B buildings, but Steve roamed all over the place like a cockroach. Werner and I's mistake was also that we did not evict Steve as soon as we took over. We told Minton to do it before hand which he refused. We failed to do it because in Michigan you can not evict a nursing home resident just because they don't fit into your patient mix, and we had no idea that Florida allowed one to do so. So we thought our hands were tied.

When Werner needed financing for the Sun N Lake Towers purchase he walked into Barnett Bank several months before the closing and told them he was thinking of borrowing \$2 Million. The bank manager looked at Werner in his shorts and sandals and no socks with his hair all messed up and thought he was a bag man from off the street. Werner ignored the looks on their

faces and said he thought they would probably want some sort of collateral so he pulled out his checkbook and wrote a check for \$1 million and said he would purchase stocks through their attached brokerage services and they could tie this up for collateral. The men looked at one another at this point with a look of confusion and astonishment on their faces and they all had the same thought simultaneously, - maybe this fellow is for real. When they escorted him over to the stock brokerage area and he purchased and paid for the stocks with a valid \$1 million check, they knew he was a substantial businessman. They had just never yet encountered a self made millionaire of his magnitude or mental set. After depositing the money into his stock brokerage account he returned to the bank manager and filled out the loan application papers which when the bank verified his net worth, was speedily approved. Instead of looking askance at Werner they were now falling all over him. He was a customer of the highest magnitude and they wanted to milk his net worth for all it was worth. Werner loved being fawned over by the banks and stock broker houses. It was proof of one of his favorite German sayings, "To be more than you appear". (A year earlier Werner had the same experience. A fellow nursing home owner operator, Lloyd Johnson, told Werner that the Gold dome bank's stock brokerage in northern Florida had made him over \$1 million in just a few short years. So Werner, feeling quite enthusiastic over this information, walked into this bank one fine sunny day and introduced himself and told them he wanted to open a stock account and hoped that they would do the same for him as they did for Lloyd Johnson. Boy, those stock brokers fawned all over Werner when they discovered his net worth and Werner just beamed over all that attention. But when Werner came back out of the meeting I cautioned him about what I had seen on the main floor of the brokerage firm. All the while he was in the inner office I was in the main floor watching one after another men with very glum looks on their faces, coming in with their checkbooks to cover the losses encountered in their stock accounts there. It was a very sobering experience. What was also a sobering experience was sitting with Lloyd Johnson at the nursing home meeting while he was telling Werner about Gold dome bank he was also sharing another piece of personal information. Lloyd's kidneys were failing and he was now going on dialysis. Werner also followed him down this sad road as well.) What was an interesting, exhilarating and heady experience was when I was in the outer office area in California watching a bunch of elderly retired men sitting on benches all day long watching the streaming stock ticker and based on what they saw there they were continually putting in buy and sell orders all day long.

The morning Werner was to take over Fairway Pines he handed out a stack of blank employment applications and told Charlene, the Administrator, to have all employees fill out the new Sun N Lake Towers applications as they were now becoming new employees of a new entity, as this is what Steve Feldman told us to do. Werner had also been in contact with his labor attorney, Don Sharg, in having the new applications made up. Also Steve Feldman looked over Fairway Pines applications for new residents and had some revisions made. Some of the revisions had to again be revised when the Florida Health and Human Services came in and wanted some new revisions made. We ended up having the applications printed twice.

All employees except Charlene filled out the new applications. Werner asked Charlene for the stack and asked her if all the new applications had been filled out. She replied all but hers. Werner asked her if she intended to fill one out. She gave a vague answer. Werner asked her if she intended to remain an employee. Again she gave a vague answer. Werner told her if she wanted to be an employee of the new entity she needed to fill out an employment application. At

the end of the day when he asked if she had completed an employment application and she said no, he told her no application, no employment, so she was to pack up her belongings and leave. That really shocked her. We never knew what her intentions were, because she never discussed them with us. She never gave an explanation as to why the application was never tendered.



Connie Basset

Connie Basset took over as second in command under Werner and I. She reveled in the job but was scared of it as there were many difficult aspects of it she was unable to handle. And it was a very different atmosphere under Werner it was a big adjustment. Under the Coopers there was very little management guidance and no pressure to increase census, as increased census threatened their status quo. As long as the place was in bankruptcy they had a position. If the census increased some one would buy the place and run it and their golden goose would be lost. When Werner took over, increasing census was a primary concern, along with reducing unnecessary expenses. Well, this is where the battle began between the queen bees and the new management. Fanny and Darlene and a few other residents liked it just like it was. Very few residents and if they didn't like one they had management banish the unwanted new comer to the C building. The residents in reality ran the place, made the rules and led Charlene and Connie around by the nose. Charlene told us before we took over that she realized that she was creating a really big problem for the new owners as the residents would be up in arms when the census began greatly increasing and lots of unapproved new tenants started flooding into their artificial paradise. And this is just what happened. Mostly due to my intense marketing efforts I increased the census from 51 to 89 in less than one year. And I reduced the rental amounts for the studio and one bedroom apartments so people of lesser social status began to move in. This drove Fanny and Darlene up the wall. Their elite social club was being destroyed. And the new comers began to challenge Fanny's leadership and refer to her as stuck up and bossy. And Steve just loved the turmoil and stirred up the residents with a fury. I heard him talking to Vernon and Annie after supper one night telling them he hoped one of them would win the lottery so they could buy Sun N Lake and run it their way.



Sandy, Edna Smith & residents at Sun 'N Lake Towers

I liked most of the new tenants very much and found them to be friendly and down to earth people. Werner and I joined in a number of their many activities and most of the residents loved to have us join them. Things would have remained a lot more peaceful if two things had occurred: 1. if 3 of the local ministers could have been kept under control and 2. if I could have been at Sun N Lake Towers on a full time basis. There were many ministers in the Sebring area but these 3 were mavericks and born trouble makers. I never got to deal with them in the beginning as I was so often in Michigan and these guys were running loose all over the premises with no one from management to reign them in. I would have things well under control and then have to go to Michigan and all hell would break loose while I was gone due to incompetent management. I would have the census way up and then by the time I got back it would have slipped by 20 or more as no one was taking care of the present residents' problems and no one was making any concerted marketing efforts. Werner had so many start up concerns to take care of, the housekeeping, nursing and maintenance departments to keep on track and frankly he just wasn't a people person to take care of day to day complaints. That was my forte, but if I wasn't there I couldn't handle it. One of the things that infuriated me was finding out that the so called marketing staff was turning away perfectly good prospective residents due to minor handleable problems which they were too lazy to deal with.

We had two marketing people besides me. The first one was Nancy, who I felt was sincere, competent and truly desirous of filling the vacancies. She felt she was somewhat stymied in her efforts by Charlene and Connie who would often nix her prospective resident for minor concerns. And when Werner and I took over she was very miffed over the fact that about 6 months ago Werner toured the facility under the pretense of placing Uncle Kurt there and she felt he had been deceitful in not telling her he was the prospective owner. She was really bent out of shape over this and was not able to get over it. The other marketing employee that came a few months later was Earl Schoonover who had been marketing director at our rival the Palms of Sebring, who also had a very low census. Earl kept giving Werner a big snow job of how he was going to fill the place in short order and that we couldn't afford to not have him. I was very skeptical, telling Werner if Earl was such a hot shot marketing person, why hadn't he filled the Palms in the 2 years he was there. I felt that Earl was probably full of hot air more so than marketing ability. Werner tended to agree with me but decided to give Earl a try. Werner told him that he would try him out for 90 days and at the end of that time if the census had not improved by at least 25 they would shake hands and part friends. Earl agreed to this gentleman's agreement, shook hands and

set himself up in the office on the inner corridor. Earl was a most congenial guy but had no real marketing plan and did not bring in the new residents as agreed. At the end of 90 days Werner and Earl shook hands and parted ways. Werner hired him back again briefly at a later date but that didn't work out either so once again they shook hands and parted ways. Nancy did not fill the place and started trying to find scapegoats for her lack of success. Neither Nancy nor Earl ever got half of the required Health Dept paperwork completed so I ended up spending hours scouring through every new file and getting things completed. I assigned this job to the secretaries with varying degrees of success. I always ended up having to proof the files myself, a tedious job.

The help at Sun N Lake Towers was woefully inadequate, especially when it came to management. There is just a tremendous difference between Michigan employees and Florida ones. Werner, who was used to working with hillbillies in his apartment buildings in Dearborn, said these Florida employees are worse than hillbillies, they are mudbillies. There just was no work ethic and no self motivation in the majority of these people. If Werner and I weren't right on top of them they just didn't work. They would sit around, or worse yet, disappear. Both management and first line workers. The worst of these was Mel, a radio broadcaster that applied for work first as a live in night duty at the desk, then later Werner made him a manager as Werner was so sick and often in Michigan. Mel would disappear for hours at a time in the middle of the day, often to make love with one of the pretty girls. No one could find him for hours, and if Werner would call in for him the secretary would cover for him and then go looking in either his apartment or a vacant love nest one and tell him Werner was one the phone. And when I was there and I needed him after 5 for an emergency I would go up and knock on his apartment door and he would come to the door all glassy eyed and flying high. And after Mel spent more than half of his supposed work hours missing, when he left Sun N Lake he sued Werner for under paid wages and won \$7,000.

Drugs were a problem there as they are almost everywhere in the US among younger people. Werner hired Susan and the day after she was hired she said she needed time off to go to court as she got caught with drugs in her car. She had an ongoing problem all during her employ – her nerves were absolutely shot and she would get hysterical over anything and everything. Werner's failing health drive her right up a wall. She was always calling me up totally hysterical. He was very sick but she blew the problem way out of proportion.

And not only did I end up redoing most of the paperwork, but when I would come back down to Florida after a 2 or 3 week absence I would be horrified at the condition of the walls and floors in both the B and the C buildings. (Before Werner took over an outside company used to come in to clean and wax the floors but with the low census this was too expensive of a luxury, so we ended up doing it ourselves.) And the only way I could get them to work was to put on my work clothes and work right along with them. And still they would get sick and disappear. We would have to scrub 3 or 4 days straight in the C bldg to clean up the filth, working 9 or more hours per day. Mel got "sick" after the first full day of work and stayed in bed for 2 days. Only Leonard seemed to be able to keep up with me the whole 4 days, but to tell the truth I was really sick with exhaustion by the 4th day but I dare not show it or I'd never get that crew to work along side me again. One funny thing happened when we started stripping the floor. I was using a very heavy duty commercial scrubber which is hard to handle. You have to hang on to it with all your

strength when you first turn it on as it turns with a very powerful motor. Leonard said he would run the scrubber as it appeared to take strength. So I said okay but warned him to hang on tight. He turned it on, did not brace himself and the scrubber threw him around in a very fast circle and then he let go and landed up against the wall. I guess I had a “I don’t believe this look on my face, but I kept my mouth shut except to tell him to brace his feet before turning it one again. After scrubbing, stripping and waxing the floors we had to paint all the walls in the C bldg. I found myself sitting on the floor for hours painting just above the baseboards as I didn’t trust my crew to cut in without slopping over the baseboards. Werner always admonished all his work crews that it was better to not paint right up to the baseboards and wood than to slop paint over them. As I was painting a really comical repeating performance was occurring. All 4 of our patients in this performance had advancing Alzheimer’s disease and were thus in the C bldg where there was considerably more supervision. First Dr. Sheehan would come through with Capt. Mason, leading the Capt to his apartment, putting him in his apartment, shutting the door behind him, and then come down the corridor, saying he had to put the Capt in his room “because that man is crazy”. They would repeat this performance all afternoon, narrowly missing stepping in my paint pan. Then Linda would cry out, “Oh dear, I can’t find my room!”. Sarah would then get up out of her chair, take Linda by the hand and lead her to her room, putting her in her room, then go back to the parlor and sit down again. Capt Mason and Linda would then come right back out of their room, go back into the parlor and the whole performance would start all over again, all afternoon, back and forth right past where I lay on the floor painting above the baseboards.



Side lawn full of pine cones

One of the other things Werner cancelled right after taking over Sun N Lake Towers was the lawn mowing company as that cost \$440 a month. I had Werner buy a riding lawnmower for \$500 from Wal Mart as we had 5 acres and that was a lot of mowing. Whenever I was in residence I would do the mowing which I found very relaxing, and actually was a lot of fun. Also very challenging as there were a lot of obstacles to mow around. When I was out of town the maintenance men would take over and in short order they really ruined that lawn mower. It made me sad to see all the damage done due to laziness and a careless attitude. The biggest obstacle to mowing was the pine trees which dropped hundreds and hundreds of cones all over the lawn. It

was very injurious to the lawn mower to run over the pine cones so I asked Werner to have a crew go out there and pick up the cones. That happened only once as they decided that was just too much work.



Palm trees in front of Sun' N Lake Towers

As if we didn't have enough to mow around Werner decided that he loved palm trees, which I did too, but one day Werner ordered and had delivered 100 palm trees. We put the maintenance men to work planting them, but by the end of the day the majority of them remained unplanted. At about 3:30 pm Joyce Stubbs, the kitchen supervisor and I went out and oversaw the work, or shall I say, the lack thereof. So she and I got busy with the shovels and ended up planting the rest of them ourselves. Boy, was that ever work in the hot sun!

Joyce was a good worker and she was conscientious in the kitchen. Later on we hired her on as management and she did a fairly good job, but not as good as I expected she would. But her husband developed a very irregular heart beat which eventually went down to 16 beats a minute so they had to put a pacemaker in and as a result he retired and left the burden of support on Joyce. We found out that whenever Werner would go back to Michigan Joyce would spend hours in my mother's apartment watching TV and sleeping on her sleeper couch.

Marketing Sun N Lake was a serious problem. Werner put ads on the WTALK radio station and also on Mel's easy listening station. That didn't bring in much. Werner bought advertising on benches all over town, again with little success. One funny note about the benches, Werner chose 20 benches, one of which was sitting right in front of his rival, the Palms of Sebring. When they saw his bench they threw a royal fit and the bench company removed our bench from that location. We advertised in Our Lady of Grace Church bulletin – that was a real low cost ad and ran for 6 months but again I saw little come of it. We advertised in the local newspaper which was just full of ads. We also advertised in the Heartland magazine and Fred took very fine pictures of Sun N Lake, Werner and Bear and put them in a feature article in his magazine. Fred then took pictures which Werner had used for a 4 color separation pictures and had color brochures of Sun N Lake Towers made up.



Sun 'N Lake Towers sign at entrance to Towers

Werner had a very nice, very big Sun N Lake Towers sign made up which he erected on the side of the road leading to our buildings. I was proud of that sign as I helped design it. Werner also did the design work and he surprised me with how artistic inclined he was when he put his mind to an art project. But he had no interest in art as he said art never made anyone any money.



Werner & Bear in his Sun 'N Lake Tower office

Werner had a wonderful office at Sun N Lake Towers which he really enjoyed. He said with feeling one day to one of his secretaries as he looked around his office that he never before in his life had such a fine office. It was airy, had good windows and good lighting and brand new furniture. He had a painting of stones behind him, a very classy framed picture. You'd be surprised at how many of his visitors tried to talk him out of that picture. I liked it very much as it reminded me of the stony beach at Lion's Head. Werner had two phone systems in his office – the business 2 line system and then when he took over he had his phone installed in his apartment and also in his office, the same line that would ring both places. Werner was so frustrated that he could not listen in on the 2 work lines as he always spot checked to see if the employees were using the phone lines for work and not for personal use. But no matter what he tried one could not listen in, once someone was on the line all other phones were locked out of that line. He called Bell South who installed the phones and had them come out and look over the system, but they were unable to change the lock out feature. Now comes the twilight zone. Right after Werner died one could listen in on the work line conversations from his private line! The phone company came out and said that was no way possible as the phone lines in no way connected or even crossed near one another. And yet it kept happening for a while longer and then quit.



Werner in his power chair

As Werner got sicker and sicker he was forced to spend less and less time in his beloved office due to sheer exhaustion. And for the 9 months before he died he was no longer able to walk between the office and his 4th floor apartment. He had to ride between the 2 in his electric wheelchair. He would leave the chair in the upstairs hallway outside his apartment and when I would come up at the end of my work day I would plug in the battery so it would be all charged up for the next work day.

Boy, did we have electrical storms in Sebring! Middle Florida is known as the electrical storm capital of the world, and believe me, they certainly deserve that nomenclature! As stated earlier almost every electrical storm would blow out our nurse's call system the fire system and the elevators. We also had another nasty electrical problem. Almost every time Werner and I would come back to Sun N Lake Towers we would have no air conditioning as the storm would fry our A/C unit on the roof and we would have to call a repair man to fix it. So a number of times Werner and I would have to wander around the 4th floor and find another apartment to sleep in for the night until the A/C got repaired. Once we slept in his 415B apartment, another time we went down the hall to a one bedroom apartment that had a twin bed in the bedroom and a sleeper couch in the living room. I would prop Werner up on pillows in the bed and we would talk back and forth from one room to another in the nice cold apartment till we fell asleep. That was a fun night. I liked opening the windows in our apartment whenever it was 74 degrees or cooler, but when Werner came in he demanded the A/C be turned on because he said it was too humid in Florida and made it harder for him to breathe.

We were able to rent out a lot of studio apartments by furnishing them. At first Werner went with me to the used furniture stores in Avon Park and Sebring to see what they had and the cost of each. But afterwards Werner was too out of breath and tired to go and left all the furniture

buying to me. Bob's was my favorite. His prices were good. I bought a lot from him and rented out almost every unit I furnished. It was fun furnishing and decorating each unit, coordinating furniture, matching lamps and pictures on the walls and flower arrangements. I was getting really good at creating eye pleasing rooms. I would pick the stuff out, give Bob a Sun N Lake Towers check and in a few days he would deliver it to our side door and our maintenance men would carry it to whatever rooms I had chosen.

The library right across from Werner's office was one of my favorite attractions. It was a very lovely, well appointed room. But the older residents complained that they had now read every book in there. So in Utica our library was selling off its books so I bought huge boxes full and drove them down to Sebring in my trailer. The residents, both male and female, loved the fresh infusion of new reading material. I also bought soft cover, mostly romance and gothic novels for the Sun N Lake Towers library and put these books in the craft room next to the ice cream parlor. Werner never read any of these books. When he was done work the only things he would read was stuff pertaining to work. The few exceptions was he read Armand Hammer's biography of which he had a signed copy as he greatly admired that man, and he also read snatches of the life of Bunker Hunt who he said looked a lot like Dr med Werner Wilhelm, and who he also greatly admired. Oh, and he also read his wedding booklet through cover to cover and cried over the whole book! Werner was always fascinated by the lives of self made millionaires and he admired and was envious of men who amassed a greater fortune than he did.

Sun N Lake Towers had a charming country store which the residents made frequent use of. My mom often ran the country store when she was down there with us. We would open it every day weekdays after lunch and keep it open for about 1 ½ hours. The residents liked the candy and the soap powders the best and we often had to restock those items. Bonnie and I used to drive up to Sam's Club in Orlando to stock up on bulk as there were good prices there. We would buy for the country store and cleaning supplies and office supplies for Sun N Lake Towers. I loved the shopping trip and the time spent with Bonnie but the joy of the trip was ruined by my worrying about sick Werner back home in Sebring waiting for our return. We never took in as much as we paid out due to spoilage and theft but this store was a real service to our residents.

We also had an ice cream parlor in Sun N Lake Towers which the residents really enjoyed patronizing. We normally opened it after lunch 2 days a week. One of those days was usually a Sunday in which we also served the visitors. The old management charged for the cones, sundaes and banana splits but Werner decided to give them out free as many residents were on a tight budget and couldn't afford to splurge on such a luxury. Werner used to make it a practice to try to fatten up Andy, an attorney who lived catty corner from Werner on the 4th floor of the B bldg. Andy was only about 5 foot tall and no more than 80 lbs. So Werner would have me send up a huge sundae to Andy every time we had the ice cream parlor open. Werner first tried to get Andy to come down, but when he repeatedly and steadfastly refused Werner had the ice cream go to Andy. Andy did usually eat part of the sundae, complaining all the while about how much cholesterol and calories it contained.



Marie Bender

My mom, Marie Bender, would run the ice cream parlor with me and the other women whenever she was in Sebring. It would take at least 4 of us to run the parlor as we had many customers. Werner seldom partook of the ice cream as he was so sick to his stomach. Sometimes one of us would bring him a little bowl of ice cream to his office while he was working. We had fancy turn of the century hats we always wore while serving up the ice cream and we also often inflated balloons and had them decorating the parlor when open. It had a bunch of bistro type tables and seats which the residents would sit around while enjoying their treats.

Next to the ice cream parlor we had an arts and crafts room. The activity director would hold classes in this room and teach the residents craft projects. A special event was when an artist signed up a bunch of residents for art lessons he would give. Werner joined one of these classes but I never got to see his finished painting. I have no idea what happened to it as I was in Michigan. Mr. Weaver and his wife also joined the second art class. He produced a very impressive painting in spite of the fact that his right arm was paralyzed and constricted. His wife was so awed over the quality of her husband's painting that she was about to take it back to their apartment and have it framed. Just as she was packing up their supplies and then taking her husband and his painting back to her apartment he suddenly grabbed a wide paint brush, dipped it in red paint and boldly drew a huge rocket right up the total center of the painting. Mrs Weaver was devastated over the loss of the painting as she wanted that as a remembrance of her husband's creative talent in spite of his catastrophic stroke.



Piano and stereo system in the community room, Sandy & Werner

The Community room was a very elegant, large room and had a lot of very fine, expensive equipment in it. It had a large screen TV with a VCR which was well utilized on a daily basis. At 8 am every morning the ladies had an exercise VCR tape which they played and exercised along

with. Werner tried it out once or twice and my mom was down there every morning at 8 am exercising along with the tape. It was ideal for seniors as all exercises were done sitting down for safety's sake. We also had a very nice stereo system in there. Some of the ladies liked playing old 33 1/3 records on the turn table. It was hard getting a replacement needle for the phonograph as phonographs were now antique. We also had a fairly new piano and a nice compact organ. We used both on a regular basis for religious services and for fun activities. We had a weekly sing a long and a twice weekly band practice, both of which was well attended. Once or twice a week we had coffee and donuts in the morning in this room. Werner often attended that with the residents. My wedding shower was held in this room, which Werner attended later in the session and made a brief speech to the ladies present.



Fr. Gerald Grogan, Sandy Bender, Werner Wilhelm, Carleen and Hari Mali

We had an elegant main dining room in which larger activities were also presented. We were married on the 24th of August, 1992 in this dining room. We had the Sweet Adelaides and the Cloggers perform here as did some large sing a long piano gatherings. One time Sam played a bunch of religious songs at the end of his nightly presentation and his last song was "How Great Thou Art". All of us were so caught up in the emotion of that song that he had to play it 5 times before they would let him close for the night. Werner and I really enjoyed singing along with him, especially that song. Once per month we had a major group come in for entertainment. A lot of these shows were first rate and were very much enjoyed and very well attended. We would have a very elaborate meal which was spread out along the middle of the dining hall and contained many expensive and specialty items. Then after the meal the entertainment would take over for the evening. Werner and I were married in this main dining room on the 24th of August, 1992. We had another dining room in the C bldg for those residents as they were not mobile enough to come to the main dining room. We served 3 meals per day in the C dining room and 2 main meals a day in the main dining room. Residents in the main dining room could purchase breakfast for 1.25 a day if they so chose.

We had a very well equipped exercise room that was not very well attended as most people felt that they were too old and unsteady for such vigorous activity. The favorite in there was an expensive treadmill that I had purchased from Service Merchandise and brought with me from

Michigan. It started out very slowly and was easy to operate. The stationary bicycle I brought was also very well received by a small percentage of more vigorous folks as it exercised your arms and legs.

The billiards room was utilized by about ½ dozen residents and some of the staff.

Next to the billiards room was the card and game room which was used every afternoon and night by 4 to 8 people. Mom would play canasta with the women, Werner never played in this room. The Catholic Church used this room for their services as it was just big enough to accommodate the small number of Catholics we had in residence. Father Sullivan, a wee bit of an Irish man was the one to conduct the mass on most occasions. He was truly a delight to be with. Being in the same room with him was a very happy and uplifting experience. The Pastor, Father Gerald Grogan, was very fond of Father Sullivan, and used to call him his “Little Leprechaun”. Father Sullivan was truly 100 percent Irish, brogue and all.

We had a barber shop there also but during the time I was there it was never utilized for haircuts. All haircutting was done in the beauty shop.



Kurt, Bear & Werner

We had an elegant flag pole in front of the facility. The residents had a very patriotic practice that occurred at 9 am and at 4 pm. Every morning a group of about 15 residents would gather in front of the flag pole and sing patriotic songs as they raised the flag for the day. Then at 4 pm the same group of residents would once again gather in front of the flag pole and sing patriotic songs as the flag was lowered for the day. The residents would then reverently fold the flag and put it away for the evening. Werner’s dog Bear joined in the flag lowering ceremony once and all went well until everyone clapped at the end. Bear became very agitated if a lot of people clapped and this day was no exception. He ended up nipping Fanny’s arm. Of all the residents to nip, he had to chose the very worse one! She was no dog lover.



Heidi & Jurgen Baum, Christina & Mayor Bernd Schroeder

We had a beautiful swimming pool at Sun N Lake Towers. But I was one of the very few persons who used it on a regular basis. When we first purchased the place Werner went in it a number of

times and even dove off the diving board and swam across the pool. Werner also scheduled a number of pool parties for all the residents, planning for most of them to sit on the patio furniture around the pool. But only a handful did, the rest remained indoors. Werner often ate on the patio furniture overlooking the pool, he even fed Mopsy from his coffee cake tin by the side of the pool. When Werner had guests from Germany they just loved the pool and spent hours in and around it. Werner would sit by the side of the pool with his guests. But as Werner became sicker and weaker he gave up the pleasures of pool side dining for the comfort of his bed.



Sandy, Christina Schroeder, Heidi Baum, Edna Smith & Jurgen Baum

After Werner's death when Sandy knew the Baums and the Schroeders were coming from Germany she heated the pool for their comfort as it was far too cold to swim in in the winter. Sandy and her guests had a wonderful time in and around the pool. We had considerable maintenance problems with the pool throughout our ownership. A lot of the problems were due to lack of follow through by management and a stinking lazy maintenance crew. Ph had to be checked and adjusted at least every other day. This was not done regularly so when Werner or Sandy wanted to use the pool we would force the crew to check and make corrections till it had the proper balance. Once Sandy got a really bad ear infection due to the water lacking chlorine. That was a very painful and dangerous problem. When Sandy went to fill the Rx at the local pharmacy the druggist told her that swimming pool ear infections can be fatal in Florida. He said one of his 27 year old patients just died of such an infection as they didn't catch it in time and some things in the water cannot be killed by an antibiotic. What a wonderful thing to hear when your ear is swollen shut and painful to the point where one can hardly hear.



Edna Smith, standing and Sandy in pool with ball, Mabel Sanders in red pants

The swimming pool had two bathrooms/changing rooms adjoining. This was very convenient as one did not have to walk dripping through the halls of the Towers. One problem that Sandy had was after hours they lock the dining room doors so one cannot even get in with one's room key. Well Sandy was floating face up in the pool, just relaxing and letting the day's tension melt away when as a sudden she saw the raccoon family walk across the back parking lot, with papa and mama raccoon in the lead and the 2 babies trailing behind. The raccoons go up to the kitchen's dumpster and then one by one jump in for their afternoon dinner. Very soon afterwards there is all kinds of hollering, screaming, thumping and bumping inside the dumpster! Then out flies papa, mama and baby raccoons and run back into the wilderness. Then out springs a cougar! Sandy wondered if she would become the next menu item! But the cougar ran into the wilderness instead of over the 4 foot fence into the swimming pool. Sandy would have had to run past the cougar to get back into the building!



Vernon

That cougar ran wild and free throughout the wilderness around Sun N Lake Towers the entire time we owned the buildings. Vernon used to ride his bike every morning and he used to track the cougar. The cougar pretty much ignored him and kept loping along. One time I was taking Bear out for this last potty run of the late evening before retiring for the evening. I was outside of bldg C with a flashlight in my hand to make sure I didn't step on any snakes. I idly held my flashlight straight ahead of me and it shone into the rough across the street from the C bldg when as a sudden I spotted a pair of shining eyes staring back at Bear and me. The cougar was across the street standing there eyeing Bear and me. Boy, was I ever scared! I pulled on Bear's leash, taking him behind bldg C and back into the hall without walking too fast so as to not entice the cougar into a chase mode.

We also had a resident alligator, but he stayed mostly to the water areas. He normally lived in the small lake behind Sun N Lake Towers. Vernon used to go there early mornings and feed him. The local police came along and warned him against doing that as he might entice the alligator to come running out of the lake and go after him. (An alligator had bitten off the hand of the next door neighbor of our architect in Sanibel island. He had an alligator in the stream in his back yard and took to feeding it daily. This went on for quite a period of time, then one day the alligator raced out and bit his hand off before the man could drop the hand full of food he was holding. Alligators can run 35 mph, so they are nothing to mess with.) We also had an alligator on the 5th hole of the golf course right behind us. He would lay in the big pond and poke his eyeballs out watching the golfers play the hole.



Bear staring at the huge blue racer snake

Snakes were also a problem at Sun N Lake. One time I was walking Bear out front in the street just before dark. I was so tired I had Bear on a leash and I had my head down, just wanting to get this over with so I could hop in bed and sleep the night away. Suddenly Bear stopped, stretched his head and front paws straight out and stared straight ahead, not moving a muscle. So I figured something interesting must be up ahead so I looked up and straight ahead and could not believe my eyes. There, slithering across the road was a huge blue racer snake. His body was bigger around than a fat person's thigh and he was so long he covered almost the whole road from side to side. And he was the most beautiful iridescent blue I have ever seen. I was told that he was non poisonous and was good to have on the property as he ate other snakes and insects and rodents.



Lotta & Uwe in the Sun 'N Lake dining room

One other time when Werner was there there was a big excitement in the main dining room – curled up contentedly in one corner was a rattle snake! Everyone was really afraid of being bitten. Werner told Leonard to take care of the problem, so Leonard picked up the snake with a long handled broom and carried him outside and let him loose. One other time when I wasn't there a rattler got into the women's swimming pool bathroom. Edna saw a few snakes hanging from the upper branches of trees and freaked. After that she didn't want to walk under any big trees.

Florida was a very buggy state due to the warm climate. We sprayed for cockroaches every week but that didn't stop the problem. At first we had a bug company come in on a regular basis and spray but later Werner bought chemicals and a sprayer and had the maintenance man do it. When Sandy went apartment to apartment through the entire building making up a maintenance list, bugs were a major item on her list. Some of those cockroaches were so huge that you couldn't vacuum them up, you had to broom them into a dustpan.



Flooded Sun 'N Lake Towers parking lot

The other problem we had with the exterior was due to our neighbors who owned the adjacent property. For years the adjacent property had over 100 gorgeous old pine trees on it. It was a semi swampy area, most of the time having about 2 feet of water on it.



pine trees on neighboring property that were cut down

When the owners of the property heard that Florida was enacting a new tree law in which you had to pay \$100 for every tree you cut down, and that you had to have permission first to cut the trees down, they cut down all the trees on this property and then brought in dirt and made the grade higher. Thereafter every time it rained it flooded out our parking lot. It got so bad that it

started ruining the asphalt on the areas flooded. Werner contacted the county but they did nothing to remedy the problem.

We had water table problems with Sun N Lake Towers from the time it was constructed until I sold it in 1994. The contractor had a very difficult time putting in the A bldg as the bldg kept sinking into the water as the water table was almost to the surface. They had to put a lot of pilings in to hold it in place. From before Werner bought it the breezeway between the B and C buildings flooded at the corner in every heavy rain. At first we just mopped it up, but after Werner died they had to dig under on the back side and cement under to keep it in place and water free. Another disaster due to the water table occurred after Werner died. The whole electrical room on the back of the C bldg sunk 3 feet and the huge 5 foot tall electrical box was hanging by the huge conduit metal tube! And A bldg started separating from the B bldg in the front in the A stairwell. I disclosed all of the above to the new prospective owners and it didn't faze them one bit. After all they were buying this bldg with bond holders money, not their own. I couldn't believe that Highlands county would float another bond issue for this bldg being the previous bond holders were cheated out of 2/3rds of their money! When Werner purchased the bldg the bondholders received 33 cents on a dollar, after having received no interest on their money for over 3 years.



Side of A bldg. of Sun 'N Lake Towers

Sun N Lake Towers had 2 delightful shuffleboard courts and horse shoe pits out side the breezeway in back. I had a lot of fun with several of the residents playing these games with them. Joyce and I also had fun playing croquet with the residents on the vast expanse of lawn outside the A bldg. But boy, did those areas ever give me a hard time mowing around them!



Bear & Werner at pool

Werner sat at the pool and watched me mow when he had his German friends there and that's when he realized what hard work mowing was. There were so many obstacles to mow around without injuring the mower. And so many times one had to back up as you couldn't make a turn in tight areas, and sometimes it was dangerous on slopes; one had to be careful not to tip over the mower or fall off it. But it was relaxation and fun in my estimation. And a real challenge at times.



Uwe, Lotta & Werner in Sun 'N Lake Towers dining room

Werner invited his Grossobringen neighbor Lotta Dassler and her friend Uwe to Sun 'N Lake Towers for a week's visit. Werner gave them both fine furnished apartments and he and they ate all 3 meals in our fine dining room. We lent Uwe my brown mini van to travel around Florida and visit various attractions. Uwe took Lotta to the alligator farm near by.



Lotta with Mickey & Minnie



Sandy, Werner and Lotta Dassler at Disneyworld

We all went to Disneyworld in Orlando. Uwe went to Key West. Lotta refused to go with him unless Werner and I also went along. Werner refused to go as he had a lot of paperwork that was due. Werner and I took them to the Registry hotel in Pelican Bay near Naples.



Sandy & Werner Wilhelm in a submarine in Disney World

Werner went on the tamer rides at Disneyworld, including the submarine. His very favorite ride was Small World where you rode around in a 8 passenger boat floating on water through a wonderland of singing and dancing dolls from all around the world. We got the first seat by waiting a turn and then when the boat went around and then docked, I asked the attendant if he could go around one more time as he was dying and loved this ride the very best. The people who were waiting to get on graciously let Werner go around again.

Werner also loved the Pirates of the Carribean, a boat who floated on water through a pirates scene where boats were burning and pirates were shooting oat one another. There were open treasure chests with tons of glittering jewels popping out of the chests.

He went on the wild west train ride around a wild mountain not knowing how wild going around the mountain would be. Once that ride started up he was scared, hanging onto the bar with white knuckles. When he got off the ride he was hanging over the outside rail, scared to death, saying “my heart must be better than I thought” to survive this ride.

He also enjoyed going into the “Theatre in the Round”



Uwe & Lotta in Sun 'N Lake dining room

Sandy took Lotta clothes shopping. Lotta got many pieces of clothing and Sandy also got quite a few new blouses. When we got back home we stopped to eat lunch and after lunch Lotta, with a smile on her face, sneakily took all of my clothes too. Sandy was upset. Werner told Sandy leave Lotta alone, just go buy some more new clothes for yourself.



Werner & Sandy dancing on the Tampa Bay

Werner took Lotta, Uwe and Sandy on a dinner cruise around Tampa Bay. It was a wonderful afternoon. The view of the Bay was beautiful and the food was spectacular! Our favorite dish was the crab legs. There were piles of them on the serving table. Werner and Sand enjoyed dancing on the boat after dinner.

If it was a rainy day I and the residents would often pitch pennies in the community room. I was amazed at how many pennies one would have to pitch before one fell on top of another and someone won the round. I used to supply all the pennies and the residents would be thrilled when they would win the whole pot of pennies.



Mabel, Werner, Connie, Steve & Vernon in dining room

Most of Werner's days at Sun N Lake Towers were spent indoors. He really was not an outdoor person at heart. During the day Werner would begin and end his day in the dining room. He would often hold morning meetings in the dining room while he ate breakfast. He also had lunch there too. In the beginning he would eat normally, although for the first time in his life he kind of watched his calories as he did not want to go over 250 lbs as beyond that weight he had trouble breathing. Formerly he was a real meat and potatoes man, but as he got sicker he started lightening up on the heavy foods and would start eating fruit and salad items. As he got sicker he could no longer tolerate meat. He always told me that one could tell if a person was terminally ill as they would suddenly develop a revulsion to meat and that is what happened to Werner in the last year or two of his life. He couldn't keep red meat down. He said that the same was the case with his mama when she developed stomach cancer. He saw something was not right with her health about one year before she went to the doctor.



Werner & Bear in his Sun 'N Lake Towers office

If not in the dining room he would spend the rest of his hours in his beautiful, airy front office right off the main lobby. He loved that office, saying it was the most beautiful office he ever had. Just as in every other office he owned the longer he was there the more crowded it got with papers. He of ten had papers everywhere. Messy stacks and stacks of them. When he would go to Michigan the secretaries would straighten up his piles and sometimes hide them in his drawers.

Werner got a multitude of work done in that office, running both Sun N Lake Towers and Wil Mar from that office. Werner put in very long hours all of his life, trying to get everything accomplished in a day. Werner never worked less than 10 hours, usually several more hours than that. When Werner would get exhausted he would go to bed, then pull out his lists and lists of things to do and start making telephone calls out of his bed from those lists. He did that in Michigan and Florida. Did he ever have the lists of things to do. He would almost always write out a list of things to do in a day and then cross them off as he accomplished them. Werner always told me he made Q lists, B lists and C lists. He would try to get all the things crossed off his A list as they were must do tasks. He would then try to get a few B things accomplished if he had time left to do them. Seldom could he find time to do things on his C lists and said these tasks often remained undone.

Werner had pieces of paper in his shirt pocket which he often took out and studied and worked from. He always kept a pen in this pocket too, often a broad tipped felt pen which was his favorite as he said due to his cataracts he could see better when he wrote with this kind of pen. He would put so many items on a little piece of paper that most people could not decipher what he wrote. And you should have seen his flip flop address directory – everything was squeezed so tight together and written in a broad tipped felt pen that no one else could make any sense out of what he wrote. And he would write secret things in code in the back of his directory so that it would only make sense to him and no one else. He would carry these directories everywhere with him – they were so very vital to his being able to function – all his business contacts were contained in those directories. When Werner bought Sun N Lake his 2 Michigan directories were chocked full of entries so he started a new directory for his Sebring venture. That one was readable as he only had a little over 3 years to fill it before he died.

Werner had a private office upstairs in room 415B right next to his living quarters which was 414 B. Werner bought himself a desk and a return and a glass top table and chairs and a file. But he mostly worked downstairs. He never really let anyone but me into this office unless it was for someone to carry goods in or out of this office. That was the one office that the thief did not get into shortly after Werner's death. And that was the one office that would have been a gold mine for the thief – for in the storage shelves in the back room Werner had \$178,000 in platinum coins stored. They stole most of the stuff out of Werner's apartment in 414B including his wedding present stereo, TV, micro wave and VCR and also lots of stuff out of the storage room 411B but they missed making a spare key for 415B. What a stroke of luck that was!

We had a lot of problems with the live in help that occupied the 4th floor of the C bldg. We did not have enough residents in C to fill the 3rd or the 4th floor so Werner saved money by hiring young men to live in and receive lesser compensation as the rent was deducted from their check. But most of these men were drifters, didn't stay around long and had substance abuse problems. Some of the live ins were nice, like Mimi who lived in a 2 bedroom apt on the 2nd floor of C with her 12 year old daughter. She was a decent girl, although being a sister of Suzanne who had a hard drug problem made me wonder how straight she was. A few of the guys in their 30s were kind of nice people. Mostly these fellows manned the front desk in the B bldg but some of them did some maintenance too. Once a big fight broke out in the day room of the C bldg among the live ins and they called Werner to come down and stop it. I did not want Werner to go down as he was now quite sick and I was afraid someone would punch or stab him, but despite my being

very adamant that he not leave the apartment, he went downstairs anyway. Hard to believe, but everything calmed down very soon after he went over there and the rest of the night was quiet. The other excitement occurred when one of the boys brought a Rottweiler into the 4th floor of the C bldg and when I went to that floor to check on things I had Bear with me not knowing there was a dog up there. When the elevator opened up on that floor the Rottweiler walked in with Bear and me! I didn't know what to do as Bear the other dog stood toe to toe. I pulled Bear out of the elevator and then the elevator doors closed and not the Rottweiler was locked in the elevator and Bear and I were on the outside. I opened up the elevator again, the Rottweiler walked out, Bear and I walked in and the doors shut. Saved by the elevator doors!

Sun N Lake Towers was 1 mile into the Sun N Lake development, off highway US 27 halfway between Sebring and Avon Park. Sun N Lake was a really nice planned community but was only half developed as they ran out of money. There were a lot of homes in the interior back around our complex but there were also many streets leading no where as the streets were put in when the development first started and then houses were never built along these streets. There were also some really nice condominiums one could rent along the side by the lake. Halfway between the US Hwy 27 and Sun N Lake Towers was the Candlelight Lounge, a beautiful, really fancy eating place. I loved having dinner there and Werner liked it there too. When one sat in the dining room one could overlook their elegant swimming pool and the lake just beyond and then grassy property on the other side of the lake. Werner liked it there too but due to his busy work schedule and his failing health and queasy stomach he didn't eat there very often. He often preferred eating at the more informal Quincy's restaurant on Hwy 27 closer to Sebring. It had a huge smorgasbord with over 100 items on it where you could have all you can eat for \$5.99. He found a lot of stuff he could eat without getting too sick until closer to the end. The last time I took him there it was pathetic how little he could eat and not get sick. Coffee turned out to be the main fare that time. We also ate at Paul's on the Lake closer to Avon Park, especially on Sunday afternoons shortly after church. They had a small salad bar but a wonderful steak and they were about \$7.00 for a steak dinner. They also overlooked a different lake out back.

One trip we made was as close to the Twilight Zone as you can get. Werner needed beds for the rooms I was furnishing and an old boys' school were offering some for sale. So Werner answered the ad and Werner, Mel and I went there to look over the beds. They were very old mattresses but the manager was selling them for \$10 a piece, they weren't urine stained or dirty, just very old, so I told Werner I could use them, I would put a new mattress cover on them and new linens. Boy, was that place ever spooky. The present manager was using the place to run far eastern religious and ascetic training and he and his son looked like they were not of this planet. Their eyes and facial demeanor was very spooky as was the old building – it really looked like it was haunted. We all had the same creepy feeling about the place and we all made jokes about being in the twilight zone. Mel was very put out about having to haul those mattresses without another employee to help and the two ascetic guys felt that they were much too delicate to lift an end of the mattress they didn't want to put their psyche out of sync. And also., no doubt, they were so high their feet didn't touch the ground. We had to leave that place by 4:30 pm before we got all the mattresses because the older guy felt an overwhelming need to immediately meditate and throw himself into a trance to get in touch with his higher self. (Personally, I felt with all those drugs in his system he couldn't possibly have gotten any "higher" than he already was.) We were all very glad when we were driving away from that place. But Mel had to go back with help the

next day to finish picking up all the mattresses. While looking over stuff for sale, the manager took us into a storage area in the basement to show us a lot of the seminar attendees' suitcases chocked full of their personal belongings. Many of the attendees were so frightened by the weirdness of the place that they ran out the door and just fled for their lives and sanity without stopping in their assigned room to pick up their luggage and personal belongings.

Werner loved going to the plays in downtown Sebring on Sundays and so he bought season tickets for himself. When I was in Utica he often went to see a play with the other residents, driving them in his Cadillac. They all had a good time together. When he got sicker he couldn't do that anymore.

Werner liked driving around Lake Jackson, a very big lake on the outskirts of Sebring. Several times he pulled into the park and watched the natives boating or fishing. Once he met a man pulling a small boat out of the lake after spending several hours fishing. The man said he used to live in Michigan and has now retired to Sebring. The guy fell asleep in the boat and when he woke up he saw the eyeballs of an alligator right at the stern of his boat staring at him. Boy, did he ever start that engine fast and roar to shore before the alligator had a chance to upend the boat.

Werner said when we were fully rented out he wanted to buy a home on the shores of lake Jackson. Alas, that was not to be as he sickened and died before that dream could be realized. He also wanted to buy a condo unit in Pelican Bay, but said with a sadness in his voice that the 2 businesses kept us so busy that we wouldn't have enough time to come down and enjoy it enough.



Werner with his last Cadillac

Werner brought his Cadillac down to Sebring with him the first time he drove down, when he bought the facility. He took the Cadillac to Collex collision shop and had all 4 sides bumped out so it would look nice when he arrived in his new retirement center. That Cadillac appeared like new in those days but it sure didn't take long for the hired help to totally destroy that car over the period of the next 3 ½ years. This last Cadillac that Werner owned was a diesel engine. He bought the diesel in 1982 as gasoline was skyrocketing in price and diesel was several cents a gallon cheaper. But we had a whole series of problems with the diesel engine and at 60,000 miles we had to replace the engine. I was saddened when Werner replaced it with another diesel as gas prices were now on par with diesel and gas engines gave far fewer problems. When it was really cold out the diesel had to be plugged into the garage electricity over night to keep the engine

warm so it would turn over in the morning. And on that really cold Christmas the car wouldn't start at all, and when we did get it started it ran about 15 miles per hour and then quit at Telegraph and Schoolcraft Hwy. As the diesel engine got older it ended up getting only 5 miles per gallon till it died entirely. At 75,000 Werner had to put a new transmission in the car and it sure didn't run smooth after that. We took it back to the transmission place at least 5 or 6 times and then just gave up having it run right. Of course pulling 4000 lb trailers to Logan, Ohio and later one time to Sebring, Florida didn't help matters any either. The first time we pulled trailers to Florida was right after we bought the place. Werner pulled one smaller trailer on the back of his Cadillac and I pulled the 2 axle trailer on the back of my tan van. I drove ahead of Werner through Ohio then his driving made me so upset and scared for his safety that after that I made him drive ahead of me so I could watch out for him and see he stayed safe. He drove his car and trailer over 3 lanes of traffic and mad me go half hysterical I was so afraid he would get smashed up. He would be in the right lane, wander part way over to the middle lane,. wander back to the right lane and then wander over onto the shoulder and then back into the right lane again. This went on all the way to Florida. And when we had to get into a left hand lane as the freeway was splitting I was so scared of getting killed by the drivers behind us as we were going 40 mph in a 75 mph zone and were now drifting into the fastest lane of traffic. But our guardian angels must have been watching over us those days for we made it to Sebring safe and sound.



Werner's Cadillac with Bear inside

The careless workers at Sun N Lake totally destroyed Werner's Cadillac over the next 3 ½ years. The top of the car and the dashboard bubbled up over 6 inches due to the intense heat in Florida. And toward the end they trashed the transmission and the maintenance men spent all night one night right outside our bedroom window trying to put the new transmission in. The transmission was a little bit too long and never fit in properly. By the time Werner passed away the car didn't run anymore and was sitting off to the back of the property. Werner always parked his car in one spot nearest the front entrance where he came and went. He had a hard time breathing so he walked as little as possible.



Sandy & Werner in Disneyworld

When Werner got his electric wheelchair in November he used to ride it outside on occasion to get a breath of fresh air or to talk to someone on the outside. And when his favorite workers would leave to go to their cars at the end of their work day Werner would sometimes tease them by racing them to the exit in his wheelchair. I was amazed at the speed of that wheelchair when one put it in the higher gear and I always had fears that Werner would run someone over, which fortunately never happened.



Werner driving my Puch moped

Werner used to brag about what a good driver he was, both in a car and on a motorcycle, and also what a good bike rider he was. Well, when he tried out his skill at motorcycle riding in Utica I almost died of fright. He took that motorcycle right out onto Hall Rd, a very busy road and he drove it really slow and wobbled all over the place. I was so sure that he might get run over by a car that I drove behind him in my car to block him off from traffic. He would never admit it out loud but he knew in his heart how dangerous that was and never again took the motorcycle out.

It sat in the garage until after he died when I gave it to Rich to let his son ride. At Sun N Lake Towers I had several 2 wheel bikes and 2 tricycles for the oldsters to ride. Werner decided to ride the 2 wheeler in the video we were making to promote the rental of the facility. So he got on the bike and then rode toward the camera. O Lord! how he wiggled all over the place on that bike! I was so afraid he was going to fall off it! But he got off in one piece, never to ride a bike again. The video, by the way, turned out to be an unmitigated disaster. It was so chopped up and comical looking in its amateurism that it was never usable at all. I tried out the tricycle, boy was that ever tricky to turn a corner on. One had to lean the opposite way one does on a bicycle in order to get around a corner. And it was pretty hard to pedal for any distance. Some of the more adventurous and younger members of our place tried out the bike and tricycle but only as a lark.

Werner put a lawn swing out in front of the front entrance and that got a lot of use over the years. People liked sitting and lightly swinging in that. But Werner never sat in it, he never liked swings or swivel chairs or rockers, he said they were too unsteady and he was afraid of falling. Werner also put park benches all around the periphery of the parking lot out front and that the women liked very much for they would sit and rest and could thus walk farther as they could rest in between.

Speaking of lousy drivers, we had a few in Sun N Lake Towers. Andy Kennedy, an attorney, who never had a sober day in his adult life, had a humdinger of an accident just before coming to live at Sun N Lake. He completely rolled the car over several times, injuring himself and his wife seriously. He survived the accident, but the cops took his license. He drove the rest of his days without one. When he tried to buy a new car the salesman told him they would fix up his existing car real nice as they couldn't sell him a car if he didn't have a valid driver's license. Andy got into trouble in his law firm due to his drinking too. One day the court called his law firm and asked where Andy was as he was in the middle of a trial and it was past due for the trial to resume and no Andy. The law firm called his house – he left a long time ago. They then got into their cars and started looking for him. They found him in a shopping center, dead drunk, flat on the pavement, hugging a dumpster. After he moved in with us he got into trouble with adult protective services and the police as his wife broke her hip in the apartment and said it was because Andy beat her and pushed her down. The police came looking for him so we called his law firm and they came and got him and shielded him from the police and this incident in time blew over. Andy spent about 18 hours a day in his apartment reworking all the old cases of his that he lost when in active practice. He went over case by case, studying every angle, trying to rework it in such a way that if tried over, he might have won each one. Andy never used the A/C in his apartment, instead he kept his windows wide open, summer and winter. He also kept his outer door open all the time too. When it was 100 degrees with 100 % humidity he would heat up the entire hall. Werner tried to get him to shut his door, to no avail. Andy also began to want all his meals brought up to his apartment which we strongly discouraged as he needed some socialization. When we first bought the place Andy would come down for meals. Later on he stayed most days in his room. We had one big problem with him having his meals delivered – Andy worked in the buff – either totally naked or sometimes he would wear a hospital gown open down the front. The teenage kitchen girls would be very upset over this eyeful, so Werner ordered the food delivered by the boys. Werner liked Andy a lot, respected his intelligence and even said if Hari and Carleen couldn't make it to our wedding he would have asked Andy to be best man. Andy was flattered when told this. He really liked Werner.

The other driving fiasco occurred with Mr. Mc Vety. He was about 90 years old and shouldn't have still had a license, but the great state of Florida in all its wisdom, had still granted him one. One day Mc Vety drives back home, pulls his car right up to the screened porch of the C bldg, then drives his car right through the screened porch and knocks one of the bldgs' pillars cockeyed. His insurance paid for the repairs. We were so fortunate that no one was sitting on the porch at the time.

At Sun N Lake Towers one could see first hand the scourges of age – the utter tragedy that can come with advancing old age on the most intelligent and productive people. Ann was a high school principal for over 30 years, retired and then Alzheimers' set in. She had been a very refined, dignified person in her middle years and now just as one of her former pupils came in to visit his father Ann walked over to a standing cigarette ashtray, straddled it and peed in it. The pupil said she would have died a thousand deaths of mortification if she ever knew she could come to that. Linda was her secretary and she spent her entire day getting very lost and frightened. Someone was always showing her her way back to her room. The only thing she could remember was how to dance so beautifully and gracefully and also she knew most of the words to most of the turn of the century songs. But she did not recognize Ann, her boss of many years. Dr Sheehan was a doctor of medicine most of his life and now he wandered around in a complete daze, barely aware of who he was and certainly had no clue as to where he was. And then there was Captain Mason, who sailed huge ocean going vessels on the high seas for over 40 years and now he was crawling into people's porch screened in windows, saying they were "damned foreign portholes". And he kept asking us to get him back to the Atlantic ocean so he could board and sail a ship. And then there was Mrs. Morgan, a social worker of many years who retired into our C bldg and had a very meaningful social life with the other residents until a severe stroke felled her one day and turned her into a totally bed ridden mass of useless flesh. Getting out of the bed to a commode was a huge undertaking due to her paralysis and her 300 lbs.

On the other hand there was the new admission who decided to take matters into his own hands when his and his wife's health became unmanageable. His wife had mid stage Alzheimers' and he had been caring for her at home. But his emphysema got so bad he needed medical assistance. When he became ill to the point that he felt his death was imminent he did not want to leave his wife all alone in the world to fend for herself in the presence of total strangers so he pulled out a gun and shot his wife and then himself. We discovered the bodies the next morning when we went to get them for breakfast. Boy, did we ever have a hard time getting up all that blood out of the carpet.

We had really good and kind aides in the personal care section and we had some bad ones too. We had very bad luck in drawing decent nurses. It was hard to keep them, they came and went with great frequency. After we had such a hard time keeping one on staff at all times we found to our astonishment that we didn't even have to have one on the premises. Werner and I thought that was a very unwise regulation on the part of the health dept. Someone needed to assess the condition of those frail, dependent residents and a nurse has a much keener eye for those things than an untrained person off the street.



Front entrance to Sun 'N Lake Towers

Werner was always so joyous to see us coming into the parking lot of the SNLT. He would often wait at the front door or in his front office if he knew we were about to arrive. But he never seemed to have any fear that something would happen to us along the way. The men who would visit him from Michigan would have a fit when they saw me pull into the parking lot with a 4000 lb trailer piled 2 to 3 feet above the top of the rails, but Werner was never upset or embarrassed. He would say quite calmly and matter of factly that Sandy could handle it. I wish I had as much confidence over the situation as he did.



Sandy driving Doug's full size van to Florida

Whenever I pulled out of the driveway in Utica I always had 2 visions come to mind – the big hill in Covington, KY and the huge mountain in Jellico, Tennessee.

His face would beam with joy when he saw us. One time I came he told me to pull around back and he would have the maintenance men unload the trailer. So he grabbed a chair and watched them unload, in a very happy mood that we were home, safe and sound. But he was getting quite fragile due to his kidney failure, and when Bear ran up to him in sheer joy at seeing him, Bear's paw landed on Werner's arm, which normally was no problem, but due to Werner's fragile skin his nail cut Werner's arm wide open for about 4 inches in length and that really bled and created a big furrow that did not want to heal for a long time. Then the second disaster struck in short order. While Werner was sitting there and nursing his arm all of a sudden he let out real loud yells

and was in extreme distress. It took me a moment to assess the situation. Werner had a big pile of fire ants on his feet and legs and they all started biting at once and he was on fire, literally, with extreme pain. I tried to knock them off but there were so many of them. I pulled his sandals off while Werner hollered for the maintenance men to bring a bucket of water. We then thrust Werner's feet into the bucket and pushed the ants off his feet while they were drowning. We got rid of the ants in short order but he had raised pustules on his feet and legs for weeks, which frightened me greatly as his feet and legs were swollen and I was afraid that due to lack of good circulation, they might worsen instead of heal. But in time they healed.



Sun 'N Lake Towers lobby



Werner & Bear going from B to C

Bear would roam the halls at SNLT with Werner or me. He would sit in either my office or Werner's office while we worked. One time I was elsewhere working and Werner slipped Bear a whole chicken, bones and all, which he ate right off the plate. A short time later the staff was looking for me – Bear had puked up the whole chicken, bones and all right in the main corridor and they expected me to clean it up. Edna was with us that trip and she had a fit that Werner fed the dog chicken bones. So did I. We had one incident with Fannie and Bear. They used to go out to the front of SNLT at 4 pm every day and the band would play their musical instruments and sing patriotic songs as they took down the American flag for the night. Well, everyone clapped and Bear couldn't stand clapping, he would get very agitated, look around frantically and then sink his teeth into something, this time it was Fanny's arm. Boy did we ever have to walk gingerly around that one!



Lotta Dassler in front of Sun 'N Lake & the flag

The staff at Wil Mar knew you couldn't clap in front of Bear, that he got too agitated. Once Werner had us all together in a huge management meeting in his front office on Mc Clellan. Many staff members were there, standing around and even sitting on chairs and on the floor. After something Werner said, the staff were enthused and they all started clapping. Bear jumped up, looked around very agitated, fearful, then started barking in an agitated manner then clamped his mouth on Barbara Jean's arm, drawing a little blood. She washed off her wound and nothing further happened as Bear had had all of his shots. So we knew not to clap. When we would start to and saw Bear get agitated, we would stop. Then he would calm down.

Bear would sit in the front office at Wil Mar and be peaceful as people would come and go all day long. But when we saw a punk type coming we would have to take him away as he knew a punk and it would greatly agitate him. One time the UPS man came in to deliver a package. He needed a signature. I was sitting in front of the desk with Werner in front of me, Bear next to Werner and the secretary sitting behind the desk. The UPS man reached far over me to give something to the secretary and Bear perceived this as the man was attacking me so he jumped up and bit the guy in the groin. He was really upset. Werner was afraid of a law suit so he took the UPS man into Mrs. Hefferon's office and asked the guy to drop his drawers to see what damage had occurred. So the guy did and Werner saw there was only a red mark on his leg next to the family jewels. So the guy left and as he was going past the secretary's desk she asked what happened and Werner's reply was "there was nothing there!" The secretary, taking it the other way roared with laughter. The UPS man was enraged over this and went to the police dept to make a report. Sgt Reiterman called Werner and told him that they understood but that he should be careful around strangers as they did not understand.

The first time we saw any aggression in Bear was when he was 18 months old. Werner took him into Wil Mar at midnight as he wanted to see what was going on with the midnight staff. Bear went in, went right to a black man we had just hired and pinned him up against the wall, with his paws on the guy's shoulders. He had never done that before and we had plenty of black workers so it was not a race issue either. We later found out that this guy had broken into our Brownell basement just before we came in and that is what Bear sensed.



Toni Camargo

Bear used to love to chase the squirrels on Mc Clellan. He would sit in front of the big glass door and wait for one to come out of the trees and then he would spring into action. He would sit up, then jump on the door, pushing it open and off he'd go. Or he'd see a cat at Bourlands and that would enrage him even more. He hated cats. When he would take off Werner would holler to

the aides to go catch the dog and bring him back. Toni! Werner would holler. Yes, Mr!” Toni would reply. Go get that dog! I can’t Mr, I’ve got a patient on the toilet. Leave the patient sit there for a few minutes, go get that dog! Yes, MR! She’d tell the patient she’d be right back and off she’d go after Bear. Sometimes a whole contingency of aides would go after him if they were by the front door. Boy would he ever raise his ears in fright if everybody was after him. They would bring him back and he would lay down and rest until something else interesting would cross his path.



Barney

Whenever Barney would come around the corner on a walk, off Bear would go to say hello to his very best friend in the whole world. And after the visit we would haul Bear back inside. One time Barney came into the nursing home. Werner had just finished his lunch and he then blew up the empty brown paper bag and then WHAMMO! He busted the thing with his hands. Bear just looked at us ho hum, daddy does those silly sort of things every day. But Barney? Barney was into the next county in 10 seconds flat he was so scared! And he never would go near Mr. after that.



Werner & Bear looking for balloons



balloons for Bear to pop

Loud noises never phased Bear. Bear loved to burst balloons. Whenever he saw one, he’d go right after it and bite it. WHAM! We used to have a game with the patients in the day room in the fall of 1985. We would blow up a bunch of balloons and have the patients bat them around, batting it to one another. And after they would get tired of it, we would let Bear in the room, and WHAM! WHAM! WHAM! He’d burst every balloon in record time. The patients used to squint their eyes in anticipation of the noise as they would nervously giggle.

Bear had a problem in climbing stairs without risers. Werner and I always tried to get a 1st floor motel room as Bear would get so scared as he saw the height increasing as we climbed the stairs. I would have to grab his collar securely and run with him up the stairs, trying to keep him to the inside so he couldn't see the height too well. Sometimes he would run back down and it would take several tries to get him to the second floor. Elevators were not a problem. He'd go up in them okay. I remember taking him up to our room in the Holiday Inn in North Miami Beach. We would walk him in the front door across the marble lobby with the crystal chandelier and we would walk him over to the elegant elevator. He would walk through there with his head held high like he owned the place. And on the way out the front door the door man would hold the door and say, "Good morning Sir Bear!". And Bear would walk through there so proud like it was his due. Outside the blacks and Puerto Ricans would be afraid of him and ask if he bites, and I would respond, "only on command".



Bear

Bear had one problem when I walked him along the sidewalk at Miami Beach. We had no problem with the men who sat on the curb sides as they were all afraid of the German Shepherd and kept their distance. What Bear was scared of was the large black crows who dive bombed him along the sidewalk. He would duck his head over and over again as the crows would have struck him in the head if he did not duck very low. He sure was glad to get back into the Holiday Inn as the doorman opened the door for him.



Bear tied to my tan van

One time in Florida on the way to SNLT mom saved Bear's life. Werner was in his own car and mom and I in mine. We stopped at a Howard Johnson's to use the bathroom and I assumed we would stop there for something to eat. Wrong assumption. Werner wanted to make time. I wanted to grab something on the go. He got very angry and agitated. I got agitated with him being so agitated. I wanted to have both cars stay in sight of one another as we were both pulling trailers and I wanted to have one stop if the other got in trouble. Well Werner just hopped into his car and barreled off. I hopped into my car and was about to barrel after him when mom said in earnest, THE DOG! Boy, she saved his life. I had the dog tied to my bumper. I am shaky about that almost disaster to this very day.



Edna, Sandy & Bear

For Bear's first birthday Werner threw him a gala birthday party inviting all the staff and residents of the nursing home. We had this big party on the blue house grounds out back, with the residents on tables up and down Werner's driveway. That darn Citizens for Better Care came just before his birthday and we were forced to invite them to his birthday party. But fortunately they didn't come. We put a balloon on Bear which floated over his head. He had lots of good things to eat and Bear did eat some of it. We had games out on the Mc Clellan lawn. The funniest was the water balloon toss. Pat Di Mercurio tossed to me and I missed one and it got all over me. It kind of looked like I went in my pants. We all had a wonderful time that day.



Werner & Bear



Barney

Werner also threw parties for the dogs in the neighborhood. One year he made lots of steaks for the dogs, but only hot dogs and hamburgers for the humans. Barney was in his glory at that party. After they had their fill on steaks Werner brought out a half gallon of ice cream. Barney

was a major participant in the ice cream eating contest too, he and Bear having finished almost half the carton. After Barney was finished Werner offered the left overs to the humans but with Barney teeth marks all over the ice cream for some reason there were no takers. But Ann almost threw Barney over our fence that night. Barney had the biggest stomach ache of his entire existence and boy did he ever groan and suffer that night! Ann was up all night with him and she didn't appreciate Werner and me one bit that night! She said we were very close to having a sleep over buddy.



Ann Kay

Barney was as serious about food as Bear was adverse to it. One day Werner ordered up a big pizza with all the trimmings for the neighborhood ladies as we were folding political fliers for him, a 4 hour job at the least. So he always bribed us with pizza and pop at the beginning and candy bars and banana splits at the end of the evening. Well anyways Werner always made sure there was enough pizza for the dogs, too, and this night was no exception. When the pizza came Barney was ready, bib on and fork in hand. And Ann made sure he got the very first piece, however when she took his piece out of the box and put it on a plate she realized it was very hot. So she was afraid he might burn his mouth, so she put the plate with his pizza on it up on the living room register until the piece cooled down a bit. Barney sat in the middle of the living room floor worshipping his piece of pizza. There was no taking his eyes off his treasured piece. Then along comes Bear, totally oblivious to Barney's or anyone else's piece of pizza. He had the tragic misfortune to have walked in a straight line between Barney and his pizza. WHAM! OWWW! Screamed Bear. Barney took a big hunk out of Bear's side. Poor Bear! He never knew what hit him or why Barney did that to him. It took over 3 weeks for that wound to heal.



Barney & Bear

Barney was always side swiping Bear for no apparent reason other than it felt good to whap Bear a good one every now and then. Bear and Barney played together on our back yard almost every day. We had picnic tables all over the back yard and the whole yard was mud and it was a dog's paradise. Ann and I would sit on the picnic tables and watch the dogs play. Barney and Bear would circle around one another, sniff around, dig in the dirt, catch a ball and chase each other around the yard and then as a sudden Barney would get a slit eyed look on his face and Ann and I and Bear knew he was in for some real grief. Barney would get that look then he would charge after Bear and slug him full force on the side of the neck with his teeth. Bear would get a long suffering look on his face as if to say, "Barney, why are you doing that to me?" But Bear would never retaliate. Barney was his best friend in the whole world and he would never hurt him. Bear would get wonderful food to eat at lunch time but most times he would not eat it. One day we gave him nice fresh stew. Guess what he did with it? He took the bowl over to the corner of the Mc Clellan yard, dug a whole, then dumped the stew upside down in the new hole, then covered it up with dirt. A half hour later along comes Barney, nose and all. SNIFF! SNIFF! Stew! I smell stew! SNIFF! Barney then tracked that stew down using his sharp olfactory sense and dug that up in no time and ate all that dirt covered stew! Yucch! But what could you expect from a guy who ate a piece of rope and almost died of pain and strain getting it out the other side? He also ate panty hose he dug up along the way. And oh, yeah, he ate a condom too! It was the talk of the town that Barney was voted the most likely dog to be the first one on the block with aids.

Barney's favorite occupation in our back yard was to chase every squirrel he saw. When Ann or I would see the squirrel before Barney or Bear did we would holler really loud several times, "Squirrel alert!" Boy would those two heads ever whip around looking all over the place, trying to locate the squirrel. They would eventually find the squirrel and then it was off to the races! Barney loved nothing better than to chase a squirrel clear across the yard and then tree him. But the squirrel liked nothing better than to go half way up the tree, turn around, swish his tail and chatter at the two dogs. That would drive the poor dogs crazy! Bear would chase the squirrels and bark at them too, but only after Barney did so. Bear never initiated the chase, it was always a me too, follow the leader response.



Barney

Barney always went mousing at 3 pm sharp every day of the week. And every day almost he would see the train come through the fields behind the school. And Barney would sit there and watch in amazement as that big monster would come through his private territory. Bear and his mommy always wanted to go at 3 pm too but we had to work. We longed to go mousing with Barney. One time Werner let us go early for the 3 pm mousing expedition. We were in the field next to the school ground when the big train came through. I leashed up Bear to keep him safe as I was afraid he would chase the train like he did bikes. Boy, was Bear amazed at that huge train coming through his field. He just sat there and stared and stared. The train conductor waved at us as he passed by. Bear and I did go many times in the wilderness after work. Often Ann would come with us. We would go in the park at the first guard rail and would either walk down in the valley for a long ways or we would walk parallel to the Clinton River and end up back on the railroad tracks close to the school playground. Often when we got past the guardrail we would just sit and watch the Owl in his nest in the biggest tree in the valley. He was there a whole year. Or we would walk along the river, with Bear and Barney jumping in the deep part of the Clinton River which scared me to death as they had to go down 6 feet before they hit the water. The water was swift and deep there and there was also a lot of junk there I was afraid the dogs might get caught in. Bear and Barney had to struggle to get back up that wet slippery 6 foot embankment that curved backwards at the top. But I couldn't keep them out of there. Every time they knew just where this side path led and they went down there ahead of us every time. Then the main path would lead down an embankment and into a forest. Barney would wipe Bear out on the hill every time. Then we would walk through the forest and end up at the wide part of the Clinton River. We would sit on the bank of the river and throw sticks for our dogs to fetch. Moukie was by far the best fetcher. She would swim out with no hesitation and would swim into the swiftest current. Moukie would sometimes swim across the river and end up on the island on the other side of the river and us 3 adults would stand there on the far shore looking stupid as that dog ran off and did what she darn well pleased and we couldn't go after her. Moukie was a very happy, very powerful Chesapeake Bay Retriever. She always had a really broad smile on her face. She loved to play ball and was a champion at it. Only my Taffy was a better ball snagger. One year we had a drought and the water was so low we could walk across the river to the other side. Another year snapping turtles took up residence on the far shore of the river. They were huge in diameter and the dogs learned to respect them and keep their distance. One time Moukie caught scent of a deer and she was gone in a flash. She didn't return for 45 minutes. She came back utterly exhausted.

Werner went walking with us twice. The first time he decided to come along with Ann Bear and me to see where we went. I took him along the railroad tracks and then into the park at the first

guardrail. We then walked along the path and into the forest in the park. We came out of the forest at the river and rested there a bit. We then had to climb 2 stories straight up to get to the railroad tracks which we would then walk along for about a block. We were sure Werner would never get up that 2 story steep embankment but he sure fooled us! He took that steep hill in stride, coming out on top in better condition than Ann or me. We then walked along the tracks and up the hill onto the school ground and back home.

The second time Werner came with me it was a deep dusk to rescue a sick dog that was stuck in the deep part of the river where the swift current ran through that I was always so afraid when Bear jumped in there. Werner and I walked in there with a rope and flashlights. We found the dog swimming in the water, with only his head and neck sticking out. He was a cute black cockapoo about 22 lbs. His owner had been looking for him in great distress all day. I felt so bad that I didn't take this man's name and number so I could call him and tell him where his dog was. But anyway Werner and I spent the better part of an hour trying to rescue this dog but every time I or the rope would get near the dog the dog would move away. Werner and I finally figured out that this dog did not want to be rescued. So Werner and I gathered up our rope and flash lights and with heavy hearts headed home. Werner told that dog he was really dumb not allowing us to rescue him. But I figured the dog had a fever and the cold water felt good on his body.

One time Bear really hurt Werner's feelings. Bear and I were up north at Lion's head for a week's vacation. When I got back to Michigan I called Werner from the rest stop just south of Richmond on I-94 and told him Bear and I would soon be home, much to Werner's delight. ½ hour later I pulled into Werner's driveway and let Bear out telling him all the while with great enthusiasm that we were going to see daddy. But Bear had other ideas. He jumped out of the car and then ran all around the Wil Mar property, onto Brownell and pounded on Barney's door to tell him he was home. Werner was so hurt that the dog had no interest in seeing him first, that Barney was more important! Naturally Werner was greeted by him second, but that sure hurt Werner's feelings. Bear tried to make it up to him by sleeping with him that night.



Werner & Bear

A very fun thing Bear used to do when he was a teenager was when he would come into Werner's bedroom and Werner would be mean to me I used to say to Bear, "Sic em, Bear!" Werner would have a nervous worried look on his face as he would say, no Bearsie dogsie, don't hurt daddy. I would then repeat, "Sic em!" Bear would jump up on the bed, jump over Werner's body and start

chewing on his arms. No, Bearsie, no! I would hear Werner say in a playful but worried tone of voice. But Werner always liked a sharp dog. That's why he chose a Shepherd.



Bear on side road in Lion's Head



Edna in Szulc cottage

One time I took Bear to Lion's Head with me to the Cedar Grove Cottages owned by Lydia Szulc. Every year she would not let me bring him but this one year she said that if I came in June I could bring him. Such a big dog! Was her response when I showed up at the cottage. She was definitely afraid of him, big time! And she told me he was not to go on her property at all. So every time I took him out I ran as fast as my legs would take me to make it across the road before he peed or dumped. He never went on her property but nonetheless she accused him of doing it. Some other dog must have wandered through because he never was without me and he never stopped on her property. The only thing he did do is I left him in the cottage with mom once and he scratched the inside of the front door trying to get out to get to me. I sure felt bad about those few light scratch marks. I never again left him alone in the cottage.

Werner used to call me once or more every day while I was up there. Mrs. Szulc would answer the phone and then come and get me. Werner was so nice and kind on the phone when he would call. It was the highlight of my day to be able to talk to him like that. Would that I could still pick up a phone and be able to once again converse with him.



Sandy & Werner Wilhelm

On our way home from the cottage we passed the Onward Christian Soldiers Camp on the Chesley Lake Rd. So when I saw we were on their property I spontaneously started singing Onward Christian Soldiers. In the middle of my singing that song Bear started howling along with me. That was the first time he ever "sang". When I got home and in bed with Werner that night I showed him how Bear could sing. He was delightedly shocked. But he was spooked too and he would not let me continue singing for long periods with the dog as he was afraid of the other worldly aspects of that howling. It made his skin crawl with fear.

One time Bear and I had a late night scare on Cass Ave. We were walking south on Cass and were almost home after 11 pm when a car jumped over the sidewalk and was coming toward us. We ran into our driveway and we figured we were somewhat safe because the evergreen trees were between us and the car. We kept running for Werner's bedroom calling his name as loud as we could. He never heard us. We burst into his bedroom telling him about the guy in the car. Werner went out front but the guy was long gone.

I felt safe walking with Bear after dark as he would protect me with his life. I had to keep him away from people after dark as he would attack them all, protecting me. So we would step far off the sidewalk when we saw someone coming. Bear hated bikes with a passion. He would attack them with a vengeance. We had to be real careful to keep him away from bikes. One time Bear walked out of the nursing home and around the corner to go see Barney when a bike came along. He attacked that bike and the kid almost died of fright right on the spot. Ann heard the screams and came out and rescued the kid, but Bear was sharp against Ann too because she was with the bike. That was highly unusual as he loved Ann dearly and that sort of behavior was never exhibited by him toward Ann ever again, before or afterwards.

We would often get a call from Ann to come get Bear, that he was on her property. When Bear would get bored during the day at the nursing home he would jump up on the main door, open it and go around the corner down Brownell and visit Barney. He would go to Ann's studio door and sit on the stoop leaning against the door until she would open it. When she would open the door with Bear leaning against it, he would simply fall into her studio. Many a time Ann would hear a customer pull into her driveway and then they would never ring the doorbell and she would wonder what was holding them up. She would open the studio door and in would fall Bear. She would call Werner to come get his dog so her customers could get out of their car. We would get Bear and Ann could complete her business transaction.

Once I went looking for Bear after he escaped from the nursing home. I couldn't find him around the property so I went looking down Brownell and then I turned onto Summers and headed for Cass Ave. When I got onto Cass I couldn't believe my eyes. There in front of the doll house Joanie the hairdresser had her car parked. She had the driver's side door open and she was putting her hair paraphernalia in the back area of her little roadster and as she was doing that Bear walked over to the driver's side, hopped in the car and was sitting on the passenger side of Joanie's car waiting for a car ride. Joanie saw the black shadow pass behind her and when she straightened up and saw this 110 lb Shepherd sitting in her car she was horrified because she never met Bear and she was scared silly. I quickly ended the fun for him by pulling him out of the roadster and apologizing to Joanie for his manners. After he was safely out of her car she thought it was funny.



Bear used to shock the strangers passing by on Cass when he would stalk Ann as she was going to get a newspaper. The way he would walk behind her you would swear he was going to attack her. Ann would hear tap, tap, tap behind her and she would soon figure out she had company. She would bring him back to the nursing home and then go on her way.

One time Werner decided to buy a real old 14 foot boat and motor. He used to own a 30 foot yacht during his GM days and he missed having a boat so he bought this one. First he launched it in the Fair Haven area from a public boat dock. The Monacos, who bought the Fair Haven house from Werner, helped him get it in the water. He took my nephew Craig for the first boat ride. I was scared so I stayed on the shore and watched them. That boat sure sat low in the water. The next time he launched it, he launched it at the public access by Selfridge Air Force base in Mt. Clemens. He backed the car into the water as I guided the boat. I then hoisted Bear into the boat, intending to take him for a boat ride. Then I took the rope and pulled the boat further into the water. Suddenly everyone on the shore started laughing really loud and I had no idea why they were laughing. After I got the boat over to the side and then got out of the water I knew why they were laughing. Bear had jumped out of the boat and majestically swam to shore! But those people didn't laugh long, for Bear went running right over into the picnic area and started shaking water and gas all over everybody! I then had to put him back into the boat and then Werner got in too. Suddenly Werner forgot something in the car so I had to climb back out of the boat onto the grass and retrieve whatever from the car. Werner, Bear and I went for about a 4 mile boat ride. Bear and I were very nervous, especially since the water was right up to the top of the boat, only about 4 inches below the lip. Werner at first went way out on the water, and I begged him to cruise closer to shore as I couldn't swim that far to get back if the boat took on water and sunk. The motor was absolutely ancient and I had nightmares that it might give out. We would have been in dire peril as Werner had no oars on board. (Yup, I think you just guessed who would have rowed to shore if there were oars on board and the motor would have quit.) That was not Bear's favorite outing.

One time Bear ran away to get a better look at the big wide world he lived in and he got a nasty surprise. Kurt Masters was driving down the street and recognized Bear as I often walked him nights past the Masters house. So when he saw Bear he took his collar off him and then threw Bear in his trunk. He then walked into the nursing home and handed Werner Bear's collar and asked him if this was his dog. Werner said yes with his heart in his mouth. Kurt then went out and released a live Bear from his trunk. I and Werner did not appreciate his streak of cruelty and a few years later neither did the authorities. Kurt later got in trouble for plotting to kill someone. This almost killed his dear parents who are the most law abiding citizens in the community.



Bear

A funny Bear story is when I was shopping around to by my tan van. I went to Grosse Pointe to price a Plymouth van. Bear loved car rides so I took him along with me. I priced the van outright but they kept pressuring me to let them evaluate my Honda for a trade in. So I finally agreed although I fully intended to sell my car privately as I always got more money that way. Well, the guy who drives the car around took my keys to drive the car and look it over. It was pitch black outside at this time. The guy came back in a few minutes later totally white, knees shaking. He jumped into my car, put the key in the ignition, adjusted the rear view mirror and saw a huge black face in the mirror. The face was so huge it took up more than the mirror could reflect. The guy thought there was a bear or a wolf in the back seat. He was frozen to the spot, wondering if he was safer to just sit there or to take his chances on jumping out of the car real fast like. When he told this story to all of us sitting there, all the men were scared just in the retelling of the incident. That was the first time I remembered I had the dog in the car. I took the dog out of the car then but the other salesmen really did not want me to bring that wolf dog in their show room. We perambulated outside until the guy got back with the car.

I think the funniest Bear story is probably the gas man story. For years the gas company was trying to change Werner's meter in his house. And for years Werner was thwarting them, saying they wanted to put in a meter that would run faster and make them more money. Werner said he liked the meter he had just fine and had no intention of losing it. The gas company was getting very frustrated trying to get that new meter installed. Finally the gas company took it out of the hands of the service department. They told a company rep in a suit and tie to turn on his charm and due a smooth operator routine on Werner to get the job done. So the company rep called the nursing home and made an appointment by phone to come out to Werner's house at 10:30 am the next day. When Werner came back into the nursing home and the secretary told him of the appointment, &%\$#@ was Werner's response. The next day dawned and at 10:30 am sharp into the nursing home lobby walks a tech in a blue uniform and the company rep in a nice expensive well fitting suit. They cheerfully announce that they have an appointment to go to Werner's house and change the meter. Peggy calls Werner, the secretary having lost her courage after Werner's 4 letter word session when she told him about the appointment. "The gas men are here, Mr", Peggy announces into the phone to Werner, who is resting in bed in his boxers. Aw, @#\$\$% was Werner's response. Well, take them in front of the overhead garage door and I'll open it with the garage door opener he tells Peggy. You go with them, but tell them to watch out for the dog because he goes for the balls. Now you tell them that in exactly those words. Tell them the dog goes for the balls. Don't use any other polite words, say the balls, you got that? Yup, Peggy says. She then tells them exactly what Werner just said while the phone line is still open so Werner can hear she did it like he told her to. She then walks outside onto the driveway and all three of them stand in front of the overhead garage door. Werner then flicks the door open with his opener. Bear is in the apartment with Werner, looking out. Werner is containing Bear in the apartment by putting his knee across the opening and Bear is behind Werner's knee. Suddenly out of no where comes a cat over the fence into Werner's back yard. Bear HATES cats! He takes a flying leap over Werner's knee and heads straight for the cat, intending to send him post haste to cat heaven. The cat runs for his life through the garage that Werner just opened. Bear charges into the garage full speed ahead, snarling and barking and showing all of this teeth to the cat. The two gas men see the dog coming at them, teeth ablazing, and they remember where Werner says the dog intends to sink those fangs – right into their balls! They run for their lives. The uniform man turns around and running full speed, slams right into the suit man, knocking

both of them down right on the greasy garage floor, all arms and legs tangled together. Bear jumps right over their bodies heading full speed ahead after that darned old cat. The cat runs all the way through the garage and then ends up 40 feet up into a big tree. Bear is standing in the driveway, head snapping back and forth at a furious rate, no doubt saying to himself, where did he go, where did he go? The men in the meantime, have picked themselves up off the greasy garage floor and are dusting themselves off. Just then, again out of nowhere comes a bunny rabbit, hippity, hippety hop! Right across Bear's path! Bear hates bunny rabbits too, so the chase is on! Where does the bunny hop to? Oh, you've guessed, huh? Right into the garage and into the path of the two gas men who have just dusted themselves off. And where does Bear go? Oh, you guessed that too? Right into the garage, right at the gas men, chasing that darned old rabbit. Where do the gas men go? One runs clear across the garage and pushes himself front first up against the garage wall and then lifts his leg just below his butt, protecting his family jewels. The other guy climbs a 5 foot mountain of laundry Werner has piled up in the garage and cups his jewels. What does Bear do? Totally ignores those guys, tearing after that old bunny rabbit. What does the bunny rabbit do? He hops through a small hole in the fence, leaving Bear once again whipping his head around, once again coming up with zilch for all his efforts. Where are the gas men at this point? Coming off the wall and off the 5 foot laundry pile and regrouping. The uniform man asks the suit man, "Are we going in that yard to replace the meter? The dog is running around loose in there!" The suit man's reply? "Fuck the meter, lets get out of here!" They then hastily retreat back into the safety of the nursing home and back out the office door and into their car. Peggy follows the guys through the nursing home, trying hard to contain her mirth until the guys have left. Just then the phone rings. It's Werner on the line for Peggy. Peggy grabs the phone. "Where the hell are those guys? I'm freezing my peter off out here!" When Peggy told Werner the above story, Werner rocked with laughter as he lay in his bed. To this very day they never again called back to suggest we change the meter.

We had a really scary incident that did not turn out as well as we had originally thought. In 1990 we had no fence along the back. Werner was in Sebring and I was in Utica. Bear and I were in the blue house back yard. Suddenly Ann and Barney were coming back from their walk in the wilderness. Barney was standing on the curb across the street on Brownell waiting for his mommy to catch up so they could cross together. Bear saw Barney and whenever he saw Barney he rushed over to greet him. And today was no exception. I heard the car coming and so I told Bear a firm no and I grabbed the fur on his back to hold him back. But he was too powerful and he got loose from my hand and off he went. I screamed and screamed at him but he wouldn't stop. Ann did nothing to try and save Bear. She just stood at the curb and watched it happen. And happen it did. When Bear was half way across the street a car hit him and he went tumbling sideways in mid air and then hit the pavement with a big thud. I was terrified. I took him to the van then as fast as I could figuring he was going to collapse on me. I took him to the vet. They checked him all over and said nothing seemed to be broken, he was not in shock, his gums looked good, and he seemed to have gotten off lucky. I took him back home and let him go into the back yard., He walked around the back yard and showed no signs of pain or distress. I watched him carefully and saw nothing amiss. I called Werner that night and prefaced my talk with "he's okay", then I told him Bear had been hit by a car and went rolling over and over in mid air. "Oh my God!" Was Werner's response. He said that news was too hard on his heart. Werner got into the car right after he heard the news.

Werner used to entertain us at my urging in the cutest, most outrageous sort of way. When things were too dull I used to ask him to do his barn yard sounds routine for the staff. It always brought the house down, that's for sure. He would make very realistic animal sounds, including a horse, a cow, a rooster, a hen, but best of all was his pig imitation. He used to make hilarious snorting sounds like a pig makes and we used to double over in laughter. He used to make fun of my pitiful horse imitation. His was so much more realistic.

Whenever we would aggravate Werner with our stupidity he used to put his hands over his eyes, making his hands act like flaps, while he would howl in frustration. He had such a neat wolf howl. He could sound like the real thing, that's for sure. And when he would be embarrassed over something he would hang his hands straight down from the top of his forehead while he would make howling sounds. There was no doubting when we had aggravated him, that's for sure!

Werner never did jigsaw puzzles. They made one no money so he figured they were a useless waste of time. One time I was doing a jigsaw which was at least ½ done and I invited Werner to put a few pieces in it himself. He looked at that puzzle, then looked at it really hard, then stuck his tongue out of his mouth in concentration, then picked up a piece he figured would fit as to size and color, and when it almost fit but not quite, he called to one of the nurse's aides to bring him a pair of scissors, that he had to trim an edge off this piece to make it fit! Oh no you don't, Werner, I said, you're not going to ruin my puzzle. Needless to say that was Werner's first and last try at working a jigsaw.

When Werner used to concentrate on something when he was working on the front desk he would take his glasses off to see better and often he would put the part that goes around the ear in his mouth while holding the glasses with his one hand while he studied whatever was in front of him.

Werner loved having eggs for breakfast. Mrs. Hefferon would try to stop him from eating so many eggs as she thought it was bad for his health. She would scold him loudly like she was his mother. He would react just as though he was a schoolboy. He would wait until she went back around the corner to her office and then he would send one of the aides for Charlie. Charlie would come and Werner would tell him on the QT to run down and fry him up six eggs. Charlie would come back about 10 minutes later with a plate full of six eggs and some buttered bread and a cup of coffee. Werner would sit there and eat to his heart's content. Mrs. Hefferon would often come back out of her office, see him eating all those eggs and raise the roof. Werner would have a sheepish little boy look on his face as he kept on eating his wonderful plate full of eggs.



Werner standing in front of his blue Cadillac

Werner was never big on exercise, he avoided it as much as he could. I used to tease him and say that he would drive his car right into his bedroom in Utica if he could manage it. He readily agreed with me. The walk from his nursing home desk to his bedroom and bathroom in his apartment was about ¼ block. He parked his car right outside the nursing home and it was about 5 steps from his desk to his car. And when it snowed or sleeted he would make just one little hole in the windshield over his steering wheel and off he'd go, looking through one little peep hole. That drove me and Dinora nuts. It had to be downright dangerous for you surely couldn't see much out of a 6 inch hole. When we were going to Steve's office to talk over getting married in the future the windshield was covered in ice and snow. I was so very sick from having had chemo that morning and had just warily gotten out of bed and walked slowly to the car, but when I saw that windshield, I couldn't bear to have him drive on an ice and snow covered road looking out a peephole so I started scraping. When the hold got bigger than 6 inches, Werner started hollering at me that that was good enough, just get into the car, #\$\$%@ it, because we're late. I just kept on scraping some more for safety's sake, Werner's need to rush be damned. I valued my unbroken bones higher than getting to an appointment on time.



Werner & Sandy on a walk

The number of walks Werner and I took in our 16 + years together we could count on the fingers of one hand. We took that Easter Sunday walk to the cemetery and back with Uncle Kurt and Bear where we ran the dog back and forth in order to get him exercised without wearing ourselves out. And the walk was Uncle Kurt's idea, not Werner's. Then Werner and I took that

late night walk a short ways up Cass Ave where the Pomeranian attacked Bear in front of the Webb house. Then there was the long walk we took with Forbes, the real estate man in the upper peninsula in order to see Deer Lake right after he bought it. We drove in his all terrain vehicle until we got to the 1200 foot mark, then we got out and walked the rest of the way in order to see what needed to be bulldozed to make a road the last 1200 feet to the lake. He walked about 12 feet and asked Forbes Mac Donald how much farther. Forbes turned around and looked at Werner with a “you got to be kidding” look on his face. He was perturbed when he saw on Werner’s face that he wasn’t kidding one little bit. Forbes, who walks 5 miles a day in the wilderness tracking bear and deer, couldn’t fathom anyone thinking 12 feet was a long walk. But we walked all the way to Deer lake and Werner really loved the scenery, standing there looking at that pristine lake. We were shocked to discover that the lake was a tobacco brown in color. Forbes said the tannic acid from the trees turned it that color. We then hired the old man who lived at the end of the Neebish channel drive to bulldoze the road. This older fellow had been bulldozing all his life, had a small machine and could do better work that the young guys with the big machines. The old guy said the young guys go ripping into the woods and in short order they would tear their bulldozer all to pieces, where as he respected his machine and knew its limits.

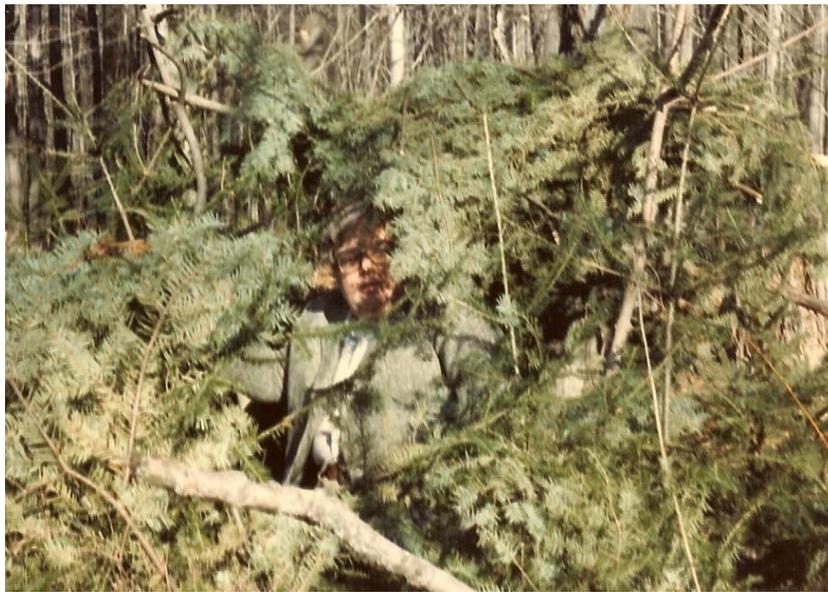
One funny story about this old fellow. Several years after he put our road in for us Forbes told us that some disgruntled neighbor turned the old guy in for not paying income taxes ever. The IRS ripped into this old guy with a vengeance and when they were done with their calculations they told him he owed them \$35,000. The old guy told them the way he figured it, they never did nothing for him and he felt he owed them nothing.



Werner walking back from Roach Lake

Another walking story was the time that Werner was seriously thinking of buying Roach Lake which abutted our property and we wanted to see that lake when we were up there on our property. So he contacted Forbes who once again drove us about ½ way to our lake then parked his all terrain vehicle and told us we would have to walk from here through the woods to the other lake. Forbes gave each of us galoshes back in the office to wear as he said we would be walking through wetlands. So we got out of our car in galoshes and started hiking. I brought a camera with me to take pictures of the lake. Forbes went on ahead and then Werner followed him and I held up the rear. 10 feet out of the car Forbes heard a noise behind him and when he turned

around to see what made the noise, he had a look of concern and consternation on his face, then he looked at me and said quietly, “Am I allowed to laugh?” Meanwhile I’m staring at Werner’s predicament, so engrossed in what happened that I did not immediately step forward to help him. Werner did not buckle up his galoshes at all, he just tucked his pant legs into them. We then had to cross a small stream that was quite gooshy. Werner stepped right into that stream bed and one foot got firmly squooshed into the soft wet mud and when he brought his second foot forward, that also got firmly ensconced in the mud also and both his back paws got firmly rooted into the mud and over he went straight forward, face first, just like I had done in oil well country. Here he was face forward, still in his boots laying in the mud. We got him back upright, then we shlooped his boots out of the quick sand like mud and got them back on his feet and then we were on our way again. It was a much longer walk to the lake that he expected and he grumbled all the way there and back.



Werner taking “a big dump” in the duck blind

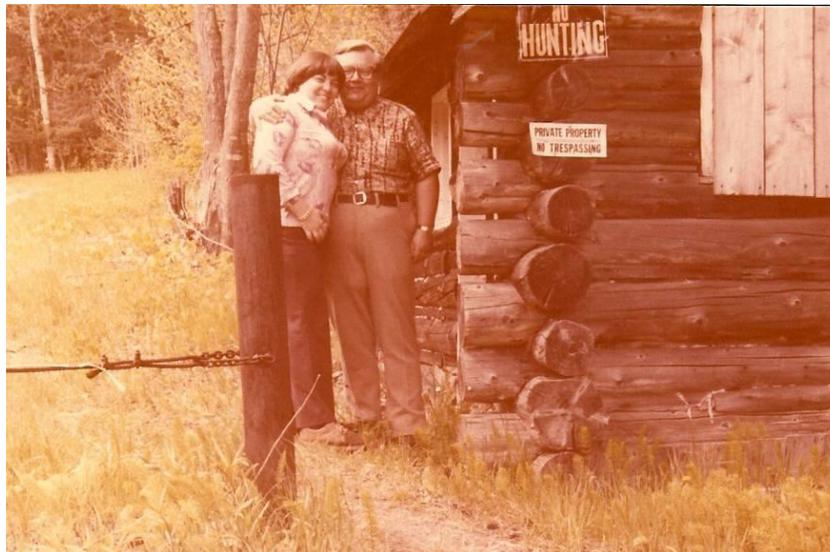
But one more story on this trek to Roach lake bears retelling. When we were about 1/3 of the way there, Werner asked, “What’s that”, pointing to a makeshift hut made out of pine boughs. Forbes told him it was a duck blind. “What’s a duck blind?”, Werner asked. Where hunters sit waiting for deer or bear to come by, Forbes replied. Is this on my property, Werner asked? Yes, replied Forbes. You guys go on up ahead, I’ll just be a minute, Werner told us. We walked a bit ahead, then my curiosity got the best of me and I circled back around to see what Werner was up to. There he sat in the duck blind, pants down, taking a shit! What a hilarious site that was! I whipped out my camera and saved the moment for posterity! When he was done, he took one more bough and put it over the seat so they would sit in it before they saw it. Forbes thought Werner was outrageous. Werner thought hunters are outrageous.

When we finally got to Roach Lake we thought it was indeed beautiful. It sat in a valley and we were on a really high ridge overlooking the lake. The land was full of gorgeous white pine. The top of the ridge would have been a perfect building site. But Werner never bought it because the guy wanted a \$1000 per acre which Werner thought was much too high for that kind of property. Besides it was land locked. In order for us to get to it we would have had to build a really long

road from our road to the building site. And then it would have been dreadfully expensive to have brought in electricity.

Electricity was always a problem if you wanted to build in those woods. Werner pulled in 3 trailers ½ mile inland on his property but we could not get any electricity or running water or sewage there. Werner just put those trailers there for tax purposes so he could have a tax write off. We also had a better trailer right on the Neebish channel, but again no utilities were ever hooked up there.

When we got back to the real estate office Werner saw a large bear stuffed standing in a corner of the office. How did that get there, Werner asked Forbes. I shot him and had him stuffed, was Forbes reply. Werner then said very vociferously, “you shoot a bear on my property and I’ll shoot you!” Forbes jumped a bit as he was startled as he realized that Werner meant it.



Sandy & Werner at the entrance of the 1600 acres in Barbeau, Michigan

Werner’s 1600 acres up north was to me a frightening place on many occasions. It was vast and one could easily get very lost in those woods if one ventured from the main path. There was a front main path into the property and then there was a back way in via a mile road. Werner improved the front road so you could drive all the way in to Deer lake. But the back way in had a huge dip in it in the county road and the Cadillac could not get over that dip. The car would have hung up due to the big V the dip made. One time Werner tried to run the V and got royally stuck. I was scared as it was almost 5 pm, getting dark and we were in the middle of no where and there were no houses for miles. Just then the DNR guy comes along and pulls a come along out of his truck and gets out of the mess Werner drove us into. Were we ever relieved! We were all so very grateful to get back to our motel room and a good dinner at the Village Inn in Pickford! Another time, on December 6, 1980 Werner drive us to the back and stopped just short of the big V and then he, Kurt and I walked the rest of the way past the apple orchard to the Christmas tree stand. We then picked out 2 nice Christmas trees and I sawed them down and Kurt and I dragged them to the Cadillac where Werner tied them to the roof of the car. We then drove them back to Utica and put them in water until closer to Christmas, when we put them up and decorated them. It was a wonderful smell, those pine trees, but what a mess when the needles fell or when we had

to drag them out of the house after Christmas. I am still finding pine needles in Werner's house 20 years later.



Sandy picking up engagement ring, Werner looking on



Werner & Sandy with the ring

That day was the same day that Werner walked into the property on the front end with me and when we got to the gate he dropped on the ground my engagement ring, then kept on walking and then turned around and when we reached the gate, he shined his flashlight on the ground and I found the ring. He then put it on my finger and was so happy. He said he dropped the ring there so I would always remember where and when I got my engagement ring. When I got back into the car Kurt reached for my right hand and was confused when he didn't find the ring there as expected. It turned out he reached for the wrong hand because the Germans wear the engagement ring on the right hand, not the left. Afterwards we went to the Robin's Nest in Sault Ste. Marie and had a fine dinner. Werner teased Uncle Kurt that night telling him to eat up all that was on the salad bar otherwise the restaurant was just going to throw all that food away.

That day was a big roller coaster ride for Werner and me for it appeared at that time that the fertility treatments had finally come to fruition and we were so hopeful. But after I got home to New Baltimore I had what appeared to be an early miscarriage, what a painful end to what appeared to be a glorious week in our lives.



Werner sitting on the burgundy Puch moped



the white Puch moped

Another time when we went up north we put the 2 mopeds on the bumper of Werner's Cadillac and drove to the back end of the property. We then drove the 2 mopeds onto Werner's property, past the apple orchard, then past the Christmas tree stand. We then drove them across the open field and into the hardwood forest to the end of his property. We then turned back and drove to the back end of where we thought the lake might be. We then got off the bikes and I stayed in the open field while Werner walked through the dense forest trying to locate the lake. I brought yarn along and made him take the skein with him so that he could follow the string back out. He was afraid of getting lost in there so he did use the yarn and he made me call out to him at regular intervals so he could locate where I was. He never did find the lake from that angle.



Taffy & Marie Bender on Werner's 1600 acres at Deer Lake



Marie, Craig & Sandy near the Bear

Once I went to Werner's 1600 acre property with Craig, mom and Taffy. We went to Deer lake by car. We all got out of the car and then when mom saw a big tree in front of the lake with Kurt's initials carved in it she borrowed Craig's pocket knife and carved her initials in the big tree. While she was doing that a bear came really near by and he breathed real heavy like he had a bad case of asthma. Taffy heard and smelled him and she whimpered and twisted in abject fear. I put her in the car and was she ever happy to be out of there. Mom and Craig never realized that the bear was only a few yards away and I didn't tell them either. I just hustled them back into the car as fast as they finished carving in the tree. Craig and I then drove further down and we dug a trench from one side of the road to the other to let the water drain. Cecil Atkins, the bulldozer operator wanted to put culverts in to let the road drain but Werner didn't want to spend the money and said to wait and see how the road did without the culverts.

The next day Craig and I went fishing in Deer Lake. Craig hooked 2 trout but they both got away. We were in that little sail boat the Werner bought and we both carried to the lake. The one trout jumped way high in the air when it got off Craig's hook. All I saw was the upside down fish's really white belly. We had a rough time with bees bombarding me while we were in the boat. I thought they would leave us alone when we were on the water away from the trees. We paddled over to look at the stream that fed into Deer lake from Muscrat lake. I later saw a young man fjord that stream crossing over from the front of the property to the back. Werner told him to go back where he came from but the kid ignored him and kept on going forward.



Sandy in sail boat on Deer Lake. Poor picture due to Werner drowning camera in sail boat

Werner and I sailed in that little boat the day we put it into the water. I put up the sail and then we both got into the boat from our dilapidated dock. I sat in back and Werner sat on the prow. I had the camera with me to take pictures. The sail worked really well and we really took off flying, heading for the eastern shore. I was worried about slowing down before we slammed into the shoreline. I needed not to have worried about that, for I soon had something better to worry about. The faster the boat sailed, the lower the prow sank into the water. Very soon tons of water started flowing over the prow and into the boat. And I realized that we would soon sink. The camera, which was in the bottom of the boat was inundated. All pictures developed from that camera turned out looking like they were taken under water. I was screaming at Werner to get his butt off the prow. He took awhile to comprehend what I was screaming at him for and that the water was pouring in because he was depressing the prow. Finally he got down into the boat and the water stopped. But I had nothing to bail out the water with and the boat was sinking. I grabbed the paddles and paddled it back to the dock, which was hard due to all the weight. That was the last time I went into the boat with Werner. I had a life jacket on and Werner was an excellent swimmer but I had heard tales of people drowning when they got caught in the weeds and I was afraid as there certainly were a lot of weeds present there.

Another time we were on the property with Forbes and were walking in the tall grass just before the marshy area around the lake. We had Bear with us and he was nosing around and suddenly Forbes told me to grab the dog. Just a few feet away from us was a porcupine rambling about. Forbes said if bear got any closer to him the porcupine might throw his quills. He said it's awful painful for the dog and hard to pull all those quills out of his face with a pair of pliers. Forbes then told us if we park the car and leave it for any length of time there we should put a bowl of salt next to the tire otherwise the porcupine might eat a hole in the tire as they like the salt taste of tires.

One time Werner sent me up north with Dee and Owen while he finished working at the nursing home. I was very reluctant to leave as my dad was in shock over my brother's death and it was father's day and I had to quickly give him his presents as I had to get back to Owen and Dee to

drive up north with them. My heart was heavy and I did not want to go. My dad was in such deep shock that he had no interest in any kind of presents. He was numb with grief. We then went up north and stopped at Mackinac City and went souvenir shopping in the tourist trap places, then went across the bridge and registered at the Village Inn in Pickford, where we usually stayed. The next day we rented a boat and went fishing. I fell asleep in the boat and while I was sleeping a fish bit and by the time I was awake enough to realize what had happened the fish got away. They were really upset with me that I did not reel in the only fish that bit that day. Then on the way back in I had thought shore was the opposite way of where Owen was heading but I kept my mouth shut. It was a good thing I did too because he was right. I got turned around while I slept. Werner soon came up and joined us. I called my dad to wish him happy birthday, but mom had to relay the message to him as he was in the bathroom. On Friday we had company coming so I told Werner I needed to go back home. So he drove me to the bridge and I caught the greyhound bus early in the morning and rode into Pontiac. Dad picked me up in Pontiac and then I drove to East Lansing and picked up my Aunt Elenore and her daughter Marianne. We had a wonderful ride home and stopped and ate at the Big Boy on 21 Mile Rd.



Edward Bender

Dad complained of a raw feeling in his chest the whole weekend. He said he would take a codeine pill every night and that would take away the pain and give him a good night's sleep. On Monday I drove Elenore and Marianne to the De Maria's residence and said goodbye to them. The De Maria's invited us to supper but we told them we had to get back to dad. While we were gone dad walked Taffy and then came home and waited for us to return. As soon as we got back mom went to dad in the house and I noticed that it was going to rain any minute so I grabbed the lawnmower and started mowing the front lawn. I had mowed the back lawn the day before and dad was telling Elenore how nice the lawn looked and that I had been a very good daughter to him. I had 2 strips of the front mowed when mom came running out and told me that dad was having a heart attack. I went into the house. Dad was sitting in the gold rocker, white as a sheet and perspiring heavily. I then told him we had to get him to the hospital in the car right away. Dad, who was always the first to rush to the hospital whenever anything was wrong, told mom that he didn't need to go to the hospital that he was "done for". We took him anyway, me driving in a now heavy rain, and dad slumped over in the front seat praying, with mom in the back seat with her arms around his shoulders.



Werner, Dee White & Owen White

Werner had just returned with Dee and Owen. He was cooking fish for them and feeding them in the basement green room. I ran in, told Werner my dad was in the hospital with a heart attack. I ate the fish and boiled potatoes real fast and then drove back to the hospital. Mike was now there with mom. Dad had told mom "I love you". And then they wheeled him to intensive care. They had told mom and Mike that 75% of dad's heart was dead but that he seemed to be holding his own. I went in to see dad with mom in ICU. After 15 minutes they told us to leave. I was stroking dad's head as mom was talking to dad. Dad obviously enjoyed my ministrations. But I didn't tell him out loud that I loved him and that haunts me to this very day. Mom and I went out and as we were leaving dad kept saying over and over again that he wanted to see Mike. So Mike went in and I took the opportunity to go back in too. That was the last time we saw dad alive. He passed away at 6:28 am the next morning, June 29th, 1982, two weeks to the day that my brother Bill died.



Edward Bender

The next morning at 6:30 am I awoke as someone from the other side said simply, "he's gone". I was so exhausted from Bill's funeral, dad's shock and Dee's visit that I turned over and fell back to sleep, not believing what I had heard. An hour later the hospital called saying to get over there that dad had had a cardiac arrest. He died at 6:28 am but they kept working on him for another hour. We went there and then were told he was gone. I asked to see his body. So they brought him back up and put him in bed. It was a bad sight to see. Mom was upset that she asked to see him. His eyes had become smaller and were still open and his mouth was wide open. Mom took it to symbolize that dad had died in horror.



Werner 1982

Werner called the hospital. I told him dad had died. Before he called me he had called Dr. Timban as he wanted to know what cardiac arrest meant. Dr. Timban told him it meant you were dead. When Werner heard dad was dead he picked up the phone and called Nancy in California and told her dad was dead. I was so perturbed with him that he had called her as it was only 4:30 am her time and she was going to have a very long day ahead of her flying back to Michigan with her family and she was already exhausted too from having come here to attend Bill's funeral. When I told him that he apologized and said he forgot the time difference. That night Werner had an awful night sleeping. He slept but had one nightmare after another. He squeaked in his sleep the whole night. He tossed and turned and was in great distress. When I discussed this with him in the morning he said it was because he realized that he was exactly 20 years younger than my dad and now realized that he had only 20 years more to live. He calculated wrong. He only lived 10 years beyond my dad. The strain of the nursing home operation killed him early.

Werner gave me a check for half of the cost of the funeral, telling my mom that he wanted to pay my share. Mom did not cash the check, preferring to pay the funeral herself. Later I went to the same monument place that Werner and I bought Old Bear's monument and I ordered a nice big monument stone for my mom and dad. It cost \$1800. I told the stone mason I would like it done in time for Thanksgiving. One week before Thanksgiving they still had not quarried the stone I paid for, so the 78 year old stone cutter gave me a more expensive red stone he had had in his yard. Dad had picked that color stone as the one he liked best the day we buried Bill. I had asked dad to look over the stones in the grave yard and tell me the one he liked best, which he did.

The day of my dad's funeral was very hard for me thanks to the actions of my sister Nancy. The family drove in the limosine. I drove with Werner in his Cadillac. He had the car washed for the funeral, the only time in all the years I knew him that the Cadillac got washed. When we got to the church for the funeral mass Nancy crowded Werner out and made him sit in the isle behind me. I wanted to get out of the family isle and sit with Werner but that would have meant abandoning mom and causing a big stir, so I didn't, but to this day I wonder if I should have, Had I been married to Werner at that point I certainly would have done so. But Werner had put me in a limbo position all these years by not marrying me and thus I lived in a shadow world. I was indeed his wife, but had no paper to show for it.



Craig Stephens

I rode to the cemetery with Werner. He told me that I was to remain with the casket until it was underground and covered up, that that was what his family in Germany always did. So I did that. Craig stayed with me. It was a good thing I did. The grave digger asked me if I wanted to pop the lid of the casket and get anything out of it before he lowered it into the ground. So you know darn good and well that that is what they had been doing all along, removing any valuables while no one was looking.



Nancy Bender Stephens

That was not the only time my sister tried to drive a wedge between Werner and the rest of the family. We were all going to the top of the Renaissance center to have dinner in the revolving restaurant. Nancy then turned to me and said we should leave Werner out of it, that we should have just family. I was hurt and furious. I went home and got Werner and we drove separately there. Nothing more was said about it.

Werner took me there on two other occasions, once by ourselves and once with Mali. When by ourselves they refused to take his check or a credit card, only cash. He was about to make a fuss when the waiter returned to our table with a fresh pot of hot tea for me. He tripped and spilled the hot tea all down my back. Guess what? All of a sudden they were the epitome of consideration – his check was just fine, thank you. (Just don't sue us for a scalding burn!)



Hari Mali

When we were there with Mali we sat on the inner tier which was not as good a view. And I almost got indigestion watching Mali work Werner over trying to get him to sell St. Anne's.

The last walk Werner and I took together was in December, 1990. He had gone into the hospital unable to breathe at all due to a large accumulation of water in his system which had been building up around his lungs and his heart. They did IV lasix and removed most of the excess water and he felt much better and found he was able to breathe when he walked. Prior to entering the hospital he could not walk from his car to his house. He would stop every 5 feet to catch his breath. Now he could walk freely. So one cold night he said he would walk with bear and I. We walked into town, to the library, through the foot tunnel to St. Lawrence, then back down Utica Rd to Auburn and back home, a distance of about 2 miles. He did this walk slow but steady and was completely calm and at ease that night. That was the last time he was able to walk without distress.

Oh, there was one other walk we took together in 1986. We were running for city council and he saw some Cross signs. He hated Cross and so when he saw his signs in town we walked down there together and Werner ripped down all the Cross signs which were outside and took them home. He took one Cross sign and hung it upside down on his bedroom wall over the 8 X 10 of Bear and me. It hung there for several years before Werner looked at it with a frown one day and tore it down and threw it away. Cross suffered a great deal for all the anger and rage he vented on us those years. His anger upset many people and before 4 years were up he was asked to leave his law practice and his wife and son left him and he lost the house in the divorce.

Werner got involved in politics in Utica because the city and the neighbors got him ticked off. He got along well all through the years with Mayor Fred Beck because Fred Beck was a Laissez Faire sort of fellow. If you wanted to do something and it wouldn't hurt others you could go ahead and do it and no one would bother you. At the end of Fred's last term as Mayor Jackie Noonan really wanted to get in so her supporters, most notably Robert Weimer, started threatening Mayor Beck that if he ran again they would turn him into the Attorney General's office for some so called shady land deals he supposedly made through the years. Weimer claimed at a City Council meeting that Fred bought land several times he knew the city would be needing and then a short time later sold it to the city at a big profit. Weimer claimed that he hinted such to the attorney general's office and they supposedly told him they would be interested in hearing all the details. Fred buckled under their demands. He not only did not run again, but he went against us at the last in order to save himself from being attacked by the opposing camp.

Werner got fed up with all the rotten politics and started aggravating everybody just to even the score. The whole problem started with 4 bad neighbors who once the city hall caught on that they were just trouble makers, named them the golden triangle. Zaremba tried to get in the middle and mediate but by now the thing was so distorted and blown out of proportion that all the King's horses and King's men could not put that dispute back in order again. Werner ended up by suing the City of Utica and 2 of its Councilmen, Fred Cross and Jim Prough, the most vocal of those who were against Werner. That was a smart move in that they backed off and left us alone and things got more peaceful. The city learned over the course of the next 3 years that the problem was not us, but the Golden Triangle. We got lots of newspaper coverage in those days, especially from the Source as the young reporter there liked us.



Werner

Werner used to go to City Council Meetings under Fred Beck and walk to and fro and scream and holler, his speech liberally laced with profanities and obscenities. They would politely sit there and listen. Werner was a free agent. There was no stopping him or cooling him down once he got going. I cringed in my seat although I knew he was right and they had it coming. One time he had hand outs to give to all the Council men during a council meeting. He passed them out himself, walking down the line. When he came to the last 2, the two he was suing, Cross and Prough, he walked away from them leaving them empty handed, saying they didn't deserve his hand out.

When Cross was served with Werner's lawsuit, he called Werner up and told him he was coming over to kill him. He hollered and screamed, ranted and raved at Werner for over a ½ hour on the phone. Werner enjoyed it immensely. He knew he had pushed all the right buttons with this guy. Cross was always a loose cannon. He got involved going against Werner because he was running for District Judge and he needed Bourland's and Noonan's help getting votes. One time Werner decided to get Bourland's goat by pouring lots of cement up against the library directly across from Bourland's house in order to put the stinky dumpster right in front of his front door. Bourland hit the roof and called city hall and Cross for help in getting the cement to stop being poured. Werner was pouring it on a Saturday deliberately as he knew city hall was not open. Bourland called Cross and Cross came running over to Mc Clellan. Cross started screaming at Werner to stop pouring the cement. Werner and Cross were walking up and down Mc Clellan in hot debate. Werner was relishing every minute of it! Cross was at stroke pitch. I knew that this was coming and I skedaddled out of the area as I couldn't stand the pressure. Then Cross

screamed at the cement truck to stop pouring. Werner told the cement truck to keep pouring which they did. I'm surprised Cross didn't punch Werner.

Come Monday morning Cross and Prough were pouring over all the ordinances at City Hall, trying to find one that Werner could be held in contempt of. They found none and further found that he didn't need a permit to pour cement. The Chief of Police Rueben Rickard told us this with mirth in his voice. He was enjoying the show down there and had to share this little tidbit with us. This little incident hit the newspapers. They told Werner they were coming to interview him about the cement. So Werner told the maintenance man to hurry up and put an umbrella, a table and 4 chairs on the new cement. When the reporter showed up he saw us all sipping mint juleps on our new patio. Werner told them this was poured in order for us to have a nice outdoor patio to have breakfast on. So the newspaper took our pictures sitting there and reported what Werner had to say. They also reported what Bourland had to say, too, that in a pig's ear this was a patio, it was a new pad for our dumpster. He started screaming that we were destroying his quality of life. (Bourland was a Vietnam Veteran and this is what probably had permanently destroyed his quality of life. He was receiving a disability pension from the US government and like my brother Bill, had probably been sprayed with agent orange while serving in that country.)

The next week Werner had the dumpster company move the big green dumpster onto the new pad. Bourland went wild. He might as well have had a private line installed between himself and city hall, he was calling them often enough. The city asked us to move it back. Werner did not do so. Bourland would park his car directly across from the dumpster and politely refuse when asked by the dumpster driver to move his car so they could empty it. So when he refused the dumpster driver drove the back of his dumpster right over Bourland's new T Bird. We all gasped in amazement, the dumpster was clearing his car by less than 1 inch! But he got the thing dumped week after week.

We had some horrible neighbors in those days. The neighbors to the south of the blue house were also a real piece of work. They were always complaining to us or to city hall about anything and everything. First they didn't like our blue shed. Werner tore it down. Then they didn't like the bricks and block stacked behind the garage ready to be used for the construction of the second floor of the nursing home. We moved them. Then they didn't like the mature trees in the blue house back yard. Werner told them to go to hell. Then they didn't like our German Shepherd. Werner told them "Fuck you!" in front of their whole family at a picnic in their back yard. Then they pulled all of our inspection reports from Lansing and used them to file false complaints with the Health Dept. The three bad neighbors would have meetings planning what to do to harass us further. Those were tough years.

We had 2 middle aged homosexual guys living across from Wil Mar on Cass, part of what the city referred to later as "The Golden Triangle". One day the female half of this pair, John Jurkowski, came over to the nursing home and started a long litany of his complaints in his high falsetto tone of voice to Werner. Werner sat in his usual chair by the Mc Clellan door and kept staring at John while he was whining away. I was curious as to what was in Werner's mind as he usually just kept his head down and continued working when someone went on and on spouting nonsense. When John got through with all his complaints he stood there with a look of anticipation on his face, waiting for Werner to address and redress all of his complaints. Well, for

a moment or so Werner kept looking at John. Then Werner said to him while still looking at his throat and putting up his thumb and index finger, stretching it toward John's throat, "With just my thumb and one finger I could squeeze all the air out of your throat". John jumped back in shock upon hearing Werner say this, stood there for a moment in shock and then turned and left the nursing home.

On Werner's birthday one year before he died a for sale sign went up on Bourland's front lawn. The nursing staff excitedly pointed this out to Werner. He said that was the best birthday present he could have ever gotten. The house did sell in time and we were rid of the biggest louse in our pelt. Next thing we noticed is that the two gay guys across the street were looking thinner and thinner and sicker and sicker. The female of the two looked like he aged 20 years in one year. One fine day they put their house up for sale and soon they too were gone. To this day only one bad neighbor remains, the one's to the south. But they were the lesser of the 3 evils. The rest of the neighbors are now good, decent people who are friendly and helpful.

A funny good neighbor – bad neighbor story. In the middle of the heated battle between Bourland and Werner, Bourland goes over to the police dept and then to the city attorney and demanded that they prosecute a neighborhood dog for killing their cat. Like a real wimp the city attorney takes the complaint to the prosecutor. The prosecutor in turn looks the attorney in the face and says, "You gotta be kidding! Get out of here with that!" The newspaper reporter, Werner's favorite, got a hold of that and figured it had to be an escalation of the Bourland – Wilhelm feud. Thinking it was our Bear who killed Bourland's cat, the reporter runs right over to Werner, hankering for a juicy story. No, it wasn't Bear who killed the Bourland cat, Werner tells Ted. It was the Trent's feisty dog that did it. And the whole thing was ridiculous as the cat was killed because he continually sauntered through the dog's yard, taunting the dog. One day the dog outran the cat and that was the end of that aggravation. "But let me tell you one thing, and you can quote me on that", Werner told the reporter. "If ever a member of the Wil Mar family kills a member of the Bourland family, it won't be the cat!" We all had a good horse laugh over that saying.



Bear Wilhelm

Bourland also kept calling the cops saying our shift change disturbed his slumber. He said our employees were deliberately taunting him by loud talking and slamming of car doors. The police slipped around by our parking area at 11 pm and found it to be a very quiet change of shift. Everything aggravated that man. I felt that he had an itch in his would that no amount of scratching could remedy. Agent Orange has done that to a legion of Vietnam Vets which in the

60's gave them a bad name and made many employers afraid to employ them for fear of the anger many of them held inside.



Chief Michael Reeves

We did have a very bigoted police man at the time, Reeves. Werner hired 3 or 4 black aides and nurse for the midnight shift as we couldn't get local employees at that time. If they got to work 10 or 15 minutes early they would sit in their car, and smoke a cigarette. Evidently Bourland was afraid of being raped in his bed for he called the police that there were blacks loitering around his house. Reeves went out to the nursing home, and looking at the occupants of the car asked them, "What are you kind of people doing out here?" I sure was tempted to turn the city into the NAACP because these were fine people and did not deserve to be treated like that.

Whenever Werner had legal involvement or went to court he demanded that he have a very active involvement in the case. He told me he learned his lesson when he went before Judge Guy in Dearborn and wanted to present his side of the case himself and his lawyer told him he couldn't that he was not allowed to speak to the judge at all. Werner lost the case. He spoke to the judge afterwards and told him that he had wanted to present his side of the case and his lawyer wouldn't let him. He explained to the judge what he had wanted to tell him. The judge informed him he could have spoken up for himself, and that had he heard what Werner had just told him, he would have ruled in Werner's favor. It was a valuable lesson learned for Werner; one that he never forgot.



Werner in Germany

After Werner's death I went to City Hall in Detroit to get a copy of Werner's marriage license and divorce papers. The clerk looked up his name and then asked me which Werner Wilhelm I wanted to research. I told her there was only one Werner Wilhelm in Detroit. She said, there had to be more than one because there were very many law suits under this name, that it couldn't possibly be only one person. She looked at me like I was crazy when I told her that for sure there was only one, that all of these suits belonged to my Werner.



Werner at Wyoming



Werner at Lincoln Square



The Park La Salle

Werner owned a number of apartment buildings in Detroit and Dearborn and always had some kind of trouble going with these places. He had 1919 Wyoming, he had the Dix-Fort apartments, the Lincoln building and the Park-Lasalle apartments. The Park Lasalle were the worst tenants. They were all professional black people and they expected much more than Werner was able to provide. They ended up forming a tenant union and putting their money in escrow and paying no rent. With no rent money coming in Werner was not able to afford all the repairs that needed to be done and could not make the monthly mortgage payments so he ended up giving the apartment back to HUD..

Werner had some endearing and not so endearing phrases which he often used. He also had some German "sprichtworte" (sayings) that he was fond of repeating. Here are some of them that I remember:

When a person would get obnoxious or uppity toward Werner he would often say to them to bring them down a notch, "I could buy and sell you, including your barn".

When the aides or his secretary would forget something he would say, "If your ass wasn't grown on, you'd forget that too".

When someone would get confused about right and left, Werner would say, "Right is where the thumb is left".

Due to the incompetence of many of the staff other people in other departments would have to do the work in order to get it done right for when the health dept would come in and inspect it. Thus when Werner wanted someone they would often not be available as they were working on someone else's flubbed up project. Werner would bellow that "everyone is doing everyone else's work around here!"

When Werner wanted something done and the other party wanted to go home instead as it was now past quitting time Werner would say "labor class shit".

When I would get sassy with Werner, he would say, "You have a long tongue".

When Werner would hear or see someone being disrespectful to their parents, whether living or dead, he would tell me his father would say to him, "If you are disrespectful to or strike your parent, your hand will grow out of your grave."

When a woman would say or do something Werner thought was stupid, or convoluted thinking, he would say, "a real brain soaked in estrogen female".

Whenever one would think of doing something a little shady, Werner would always say that the action "Must have a hand and a foot to it".

In regard to doing something a little shady Werner always asserted that he would sit on the fence when doing it, but would never cross over.

Werner loved dogs and mistrusted people. He would often say "the more I see of people the more I love my dog."

But Werner hated very small dogs. He said in Germany one called those kind of dogs "Affenpinchers".

And he was fond of saying a tongue in cheek German saying, "In grossen Not, Fleisch schmeckt gut ohne Brot." In greatest need, meat tastes good without bread (a spoof on not being able to afford or obtain meat in hard times.)

When Werner would be disgusted with someone's actions he would say "God created a beautiful world, then he cheated it with the people he put in it."

When Werner was leaving the house of a German friend he would always sing a phrase from the song, "Hoch auf den gelben Wagon". He would sing, "Ich ware so gerne noch geblieben, aber der Wagon der rollt." "I would so dearly like to remain, however the wagon, the wagon, it rolls."

When someone would do something stupid he would say, "It gives me a toothache."

When someone gave him only a little to eat, he would say, "That is just about enough to fill my hollow tooth".

When one of the nurses would get angry and start acting up Werner would comment, "She has a wild hair up her ass".

When running both nursing homes he said over and over again that he has an "Open door policy", meaning anyone can approach him at any time with their problems and he will listen and take action.

When he didn't want someone to touch something he would write a note, saying "Paws off".

Werner hated kids. He used to call small kids "the rodents".

When Werner met up with fat, obstinate 50 year old German women on the train station, he would call them "Fat cows".

Other times when he saw a fat woman he would call her a "Marzipan pig".

My favorite German saying, which when Werner said it to me he then added that he thought it might be a bit blasphemous:

Mit Bretter klauen

With stolen boards

Und Gott vertrauen

And trust in God

Es gibt eine billige Buede.

You can build a cheap house.

One saying that Werner loved to use when father and son were cut out of the same cloth:

Wie das Alt

As the father

So das Lamb
Der Aepfel faellt nicht weit von Stamm.

So the son
The apple never falls very far from the tree.



Werner with large "paws"

Werner was never accused of being the dainty type. In truth he was normally the bull in the china shop type. He was never dainty in his actions or words. He had hands like Bear paws, which is what he called them. And his metaphors weren't dainty either. When someone would run off at the mouth he would say, "His (or her) mouth runs like the ass of a cow!" When someone would lose something he would say to them, "You would lose your ass too, if it wasn't grown on!" When he didn't want some one to touch something, he would write on it, "Paws off!". If he was really adamant about someone not touching something of his, he would write on it, "Keep you're f—ing paws off!"



Bear, Sandy & Werner

He was often sadly disappointed in the human race, especially with their lack of loyalty and humility. He would often say to us, the more I see of people, the more I love my dog. He said a dog is always faithful, always loyal, always expressing love to its owner. Werner was hurt by people he trusted often in life, first by his family of origin, later by his employees in the apartment and then the nursing home businesses.



Astrid Wilhelm Diebl

The ones I experienced first hand was his frequent retelling to anyone who would listen about how his sister cheated him out of his father's inheritance back in 1971.



Gerti Nael Wilhelm



Kurt Wilhelm

Dr med Werner Wilhelm

He also retold often how his father was so disloyal to him when he sat at Werner's cherry wood student desk in Zschippach and wrote a letter against him to Kurt and Gerti in Derenburg. Werner's Mama found a copy of that letter in Werner's waste basket and showed it to him.



Astrid & Werner Wilhelm

That really hurt him, especially the part that compared him to his infant sister Astrid and the father saying that his whole life revolved around Astrid, not Werner. Also when one would ask Werner why he didn't like cats, he would reply, "because they are sneaky and undependable, like my sister".



Betty Barge

Later I experienced when the 2 Barge employees told Werner over and over how much they loved him and then they went against him and started a union drive at Wil Mar. Betty was most ashamed of herself and regretted being pulled into that fiasco. Michelle tried to stay on at Wil Mar, her place of employment for many years, but she was unable to reconcile with Werner afterwards and the remaining employees had no regard for her, so she left with a heavy heart in May of 1986. Werner was really shaken by people who said they loved him turning against him. It is one thing for fringe employees to go against him, but for so called loving, loyal employees to do so really shook him up.



Werner at his desk at Wyoming



Werner at his desk in Sebring, Florida

Werner's office and desk was his sacred sanctuary. One dared not touch anything on his desk or in his office anywhere. His desk was piled so high one could barely find him. Werner had several run ins with the health department due to the huge pile of papers on his desks, both at St. Anne's and at Wil Mar. One time at St. Anne's the fire marshal told Wilhelm to either a. clean all the huge stacks of papers off his desk, or b. install a sprinkler head over the desk. Werner was shocked over the idea of having to install a sprinkler head so he cleaned up the piles of papers, temporarily that is, until the inspection was over. Later at Wil Mar the health department inspectors got really mad over the huge amount of paper in Werner's little office and told me that we either cleared it all out by the time they got back from lunch or there would be serious consequences. So I started clearing out the papers and evidently someone called Werner to tell

him I was removing his papers as he came storming out of his house and over to Wil Mar and started screaming at me till his face started turning red-purple. He was so worked up that he started pulling the wooden plaques off the wall and heaving them at me. I just kept ducking the plaques as they came sailing me way. One of the plaques came in knee high so I weaved out of the way of it and Rob was walking right behind me and it hit him square in the knee with the sharp corner of the plaque so he grabbed his knee and hopped all around the nurse's station hollering OW! OW! OW!



Sam Bretz

Toni Camargo



Barbara Jean Hewitt

The aides, Barbara Jean and Toni grabbed Werner, pulled him in to the front office, sat him down and started soothing him as they were afraid he was going to have a stroke. The other aides pulled me away till he calmed down.

The mail volume was tremendous and it took time to sort through it and decide what was important, what was not, and what to pay and what not to pay. Werner would never pay an unjust bill. If someone sent a padded bill Werner would let it sit until the person called him and adjusted the bill to its proper amount. Unadjusted bills he would tell his secretary to put in his "Ass fucker's file" where they would sit until corrected. One time he blew up when he went through the file and found his attorney Steve's bill in there as Werner felt that Steve always sent correct bills, Werner fished it out and paid it immediately. I wonder what Werner would think of the bills he has been sending now.

Werner had steel grey shelving in his St. Anne office. He would put any manner of things on it that he thought important to keep safe. Often others thought it was pure trash, but to Werner it was important stuff.

Werner also had a storage area across from his office that he kept all manner of broken things for parts. Glenn sometimes had use for some of this old stuff but most times it just sat there accumulating dust. That storage area was so jammed full of stuff one couldn't hardly get into it to rummage around and find anything.



Werner with swollen ankles & feet

Werner had a bad heart all of his life, since at least 5 years old so it made him tire easily. He would do things to conserve his energy all of his adult life. Since I met him in 1976 he had swollen feet and ankles, especially the left leg due to circulatory insufficiency. He always had a cough all the years I knew him due to accumulation of fluid in his lungs because the heart was not strong enough to pump all the excess fluid out. His efforts to conserve energy were often humorous. He would park his car as close as he possibly could to his home and the nursing home. He had his own space right up against the entrance to St. Anne's and the air was blue with swear words if he pulled into the parking lot and his space was taken. At Wil Mar he drove right into the garage on most occasions. I once teased him and remarked that I bet he would drive right into his bedroom if he could. He got a pensive look on his face and agreed. He got a handicap sticker when they first issued them so he could park up close at the stores. Earlier if they didn't have a spot near by he would park his car next to the store right on the curb, half on and half off and barrel into the store to get what he wanted and be on his way again. He never spent much time shopping unless it was a big order for one of the nursing homes and things were on a really good sale, like K Mart's dollar days. When he had to go to the Mt. Clemens court for the neighborhood nuisance law suit he drove his car right across the wide expanse of sidewalk scattering pedestrians along the way, actually put one tire right on the side steps, then jumped out of the car and told Peggy to park it and he'd go in and wait for her.



Werner diving into water

On bath day, which was rather infrequent as Europeans are wont to do, he also conserved energy. He never liked showers. He also liked the bath tub. He would fill the bathtub quite full then he would hop in and just lay there on his side and soak for a long time, maybe up to ½ hour. He would then hop out and jump right into bed wet without towel drying first. Look what you're doing to your side of the bed, I would howl at Werner. He would just look at me as though I was being hypercritical, giving me the "what's your problem look".



Charlie Steele who fetched stuff for Werner

He would also have as many people as possible fetch things for him so he wouldn't have to do it himself. In the early 1980s he would drive all around town by himself picking up supplies for the nursing home but as he became older and more tired he started sending the staff to do as many of the errands as he felt he could trust them with.

Werner used to wear me out as he accomplished so much in a day every day that he was always rushing everywhere at the last minute, trying to squeeze into every day as much as he could. He would work far past quitting time when needed. But almost every day he would lay down for about ½ hour at home around 4 pm because he was so exhausted he didn't feel well. So he would lay down, then often pick up the phone and make a dozen phone calls for the business and to check up on the stock market, futures, puts, calls, etc. Then after he got his second wind he would get back up and go back to the nursing home and work some more. It's interesting in a way that Werner chose 4 pm as his rest time as that was always the time his mama had high tea in the Wintergarten in Zschippach. That was a very important time in Werner's life, so much so that at the end of his life when I asked Werner if he could be any place in the world at any time, where would he choose to be, he answered without hesitation "I would like to be with my Mama in the Wintergarten having high tea in Zschippach".



Werner

But when Werner's economic well being was threatened he was a dynamo of energy, working 20 hours a day when needed. When Werner's adrenalin got pumping there was no stopping him. He could walk faster than most people could run when he needed to confront someone ASAP. He would work overnight when he was ready to go on a trip. Because of his tiredness due to his bad heart he needed some rest in between so typically he would go to bed around 11 pm and sleep till 3 or 4 in the morning then get up and go full steam ahead preparing what he needed to take with him in the way of paperwork. Clothes were a different matter. He packed VERY light, often not at all. The trunk of his car was always packed to the hilt with paperwork all of which he felt was very important. In his earlier days he even packed sensitive paperwork in Dinora's trunk when his was full.

Security was very important to Werner. He kept his apartment locked up as secure as he could. He would not open any windows as he felt they left the apartment too vulnerable. In all of the places he lived he always had a locked office where he kept his valuable and sensitive stuff. That office would be stuffed to the gills with paperwork laying everywhere. He often could not find stuff but knew in the back of his mind that it was somewhere in that office. Toward the end of his life he lost a million dollar Hudson Dayton bond. He knew it was somewhere in his small office but couldn't find it. The last 2 years of his life he had gained over 96 lbs of water and could no longer squeeze through the narrowed opening of this office so he started piling his new important papers in the hall outside of this office.



Werner Wilhelm

Werner was very careful with his keys, keeping a close watch on them for security purposes. He even changed the lock on his apartment back door and the 4 apartment doors that belonged to us in Sebring for security reasons, picking an uncommon lock in all instances. However when he got so sick at last he had one of the boys go up with his keys and the kid had the keys duplicated and they broke into 3 of his 4 apartments shortly after his death, on the 13th of February 1993. Miraculously they did not break into his 4th apartment where he had \$187,000 in platinum coins stored!

Surrounding his Brownell house he had the entire yard fenced in and an automatic garage door which he kept down when he was away. I later put in a 6 foot fence all around the property replacing a fence that was a mixture of 4 and 6 foot and put 2 six foot gates, one on each end which we then locked with a padlock, making it even more secure. One time we came home from Germany and Werner was totally exhausted and we couldn't get the gate open as I didn't have the key immediately available and he didn't have his garage door opener with him. I told him to sit down and I would run over to the blue house and find the key. When I returned Werner and Rosemary had their shoulders to the garage door, forcing it open enough for Werner to slip under.



Werner in front of his apartment

Another time Werner locked his keys in the apartment. He had no spare with him. He looked his whole apartment over, figuring the easiest way to break in. Calling a locksmith would cost money so that was not a viable option for Werner. He finally decided where would be most plausible area to break into the apartment. He then sent me over to visit our neighbor Ann as he wanted no witnesses to what he did. 20 minutes later he was in his apartment with the comment to me that the apartment is just not that easy to break into! The second time he had to break in it took him only half the time as he had his modus operandi down pat.



Werner Wilhelm

Until he got sick Werner always used to enter his apartment through the back breezeway door. That way you had to enter through two locked doors to get into the apartment, much more secure than entering through one back door. But after he got short of breath I suggested to him that it would be much easier on him to enter through the bedroom door and thus save all that extra

walking. He replied that he had no key to the back door. I suggested that he put a new lock on the door, which he did. Thereafter he saved himself walking all the way around which he liked.



Werner at Wil Mar

We were never allowed to open a window in his house. He said it was a major breach of security and would make it much easier for someone to break in. We either left the back door open when we were home or we ran the air conditioning or the heat but the windows remained forever sealed in his lifetime. He also kept the drapes pulled for privacy when the health dept or the neighbors or the city were causing problems. One time I was walking north on Brownell during a time when we had a lot of problems with the city and the neighbors and I noticed that even with the curtains pulled shut I could see Werner in the apartment so I told him so. We then pulled the bamboo shades which then gave him total privacy. He had everything pulled and shut up tight when the health department was giving him major problems in 1976 when I first met him. I would call him and he wouldn't answer the phone, so I would come over and knock on the door and ring the bell and he wouldn't answer so I would start shouting at the front door and eventually he would let me in. Once I got questioned by the police when I was in his little jungle of bushes on Brownell on Halloween night waiting forever to get in.

Werner was also very guarded in what he discussed with others about his private affairs. Werner grew up under the Nazis and the Communists so he learned first hand that anything you revealed about yourself can and would be used against you. He never got over this fear of losing your possessions or even your life so he kept all information close to his chest and in regard to his corporations made it as hard as possible to trace down actual ownership. When Dun and Bradstreet would call him for information about who owned his businesses he used to give them fictitious names and phony financial information. His favorite fictitious owner was "Irvin Silberman". Shortly after Werner's death Irvin Silberman owned so much of Werner's property that Irvin was invited to become a member of who's who!



Werner Wilhelm

Even Werner's personal phones were listed under fictitious names. His apartment phone was listed under "Mary Ellen Kaatz". Werner had St. Anne's listed under another company where the company owned the nursing home and Werner owned the property. Wil Mar was listed under a false name for a number of years. Werner's reasoning in this was that if someone tried to take away your possessions they had to find them first and what was hidden was hopefully not that findable. One thing Werner did not skimp on was liability insurance. He insured himself to the hilt, for liability but not for loss of property. He and John Morgan apparently cooked up a deal in which it appeared as though Wil Mar had fire protection, but when we had a \$7,000 fire loss in 1991 John Morgan quietly informed Werner there was no real coverage to put a claim in against so we paid the fire loss out of Wil Mar's funds.