

Val Patterson, 1953 – 2012

I was Born in Salt Lake City, March 27th 1953. I died of Throat Cancer on July 10th 2012. I went to six different grade schools, then to Churchill, Skyline and the U of U. I loved school, Salt Lake City, the mountains, Utah. I was a true Scientist. Electronics, chemistry, physics, auto mechanic, wood worker, artist, inventor, business man, ribald comedian, husband, brother, son, cat lover, cynic. I had a lot of fun. It was an honor for me to be friends with some truly great people. I thank you. I've had great joy living and playing with my dog, my cats and my parrot. But, the one special thing that made my spirit whole, is my long love and friendship with my remarkable wife, my beloved Mary Jane. I loved her more than I have words to express. Every moment spent with my Mary Jane was time spent wisely. Over time, I became one with her, inseparable, happy, fulfilled. I enjoyed one good life. Traveled to every place on earth that I ever wanted to go. Had every job that I wanted to have. Learned all that I wanted to learn. Fixed everything I wanted to fix. Eaten everything I wanted to eat. My life motto was: "Anything for a Laugh". Other mottos were "If you can break it, I can fix it", "Don't apply for a job, create one". I had three requirements for seeking a great job; 1 - All glory, 2 - Top pay, 3 - No work.

Now that I have gone to my reward, I have confessions and things I should now say. As it turns out, I AM the guy who stole the safe from the Motor View Drive Inn back in June, 1971. I could have left that unsaid, but I wanted to get it off my chest. Also, I really am NOT a PhD. What happened was that the day I went to pay off my college student loan at the U of U, the girl working there put my receipt into the wrong stack, and two weeks later, a PhD diploma came in the mail. I didn't even graduate, I only had about 3 years of college credit. In fact, I never did even learn what the letters "PhD" even stood for. For all of the Electronic Engineers I have worked with, I'm sorry, but you have to admit my designs always worked very well, and were well engineered, and I always made you laugh at work. Now to that really mean Park Ranger; after all, it was me that rolled those rocks into your geyser and ruined it. I did notice a few years later that you did get Old Faithful working again. To Disneyland - you can now throw away that "Banned for Life" file you have on me,

I'm not a problem anymore - and SeaWorld San Diego, too, if you read this.

To the gang: We grew up in the very best time to grow up in the history of America. The best music, muscle cars, cheap gas, fun kegs, buying a car for "a buck a year" - before Salt Lake got ruined by over population and Lake Powell was brand new. TV was boring back then, so we went outside and actually had lives. We always tried to have as much fun as possible without doing harm to anybody - we did a good job at that.

If you are trying to decide if you knew me, this might help... My father was RD "Dale" Patterson, older brother "Stan" Patterson, and sister "Bunny" who died in a terrible car wreck when she was a Junior at Skyline. My mom "Ona" and brother "Don" are still alive and well. In college I worked at Vaughns Conoco on 45th South and 29th East. Mary and I are the ones who worked in Saudi Arabia for 8 years when we were young. Mary Jane is now a Fitness Instructor at Golds on Van Winkle - you might be one of her students - see what a lucky guy I am? Yeah, no kidding.

My regret is that I felt invincible when young and smoked cigarettes when I knew they were bad for me. Now, to make it worse, I have robbed my beloved Mary Jane of a decade or more of the two of us growing old together and laughing at all the thousands of simple things that we have come to enjoy and fill our lives with such happy words and moments. My pain is enormous, but it pales in comparison to watching my wife feel my pain as she lovingly cares for and comforts me. I feel such the "thief" now - for stealing so much from her - there is no pill I can take to erase that pain.

If you knew me or not, dear reader, I am happy you got this far into my letter. I speak as a person who had a great life to look back on. My family is following my wishes that I not have a funeral or burial. If you knew me, remember me in your own way. If you want to live forever, then don't stop breathing, like I did.