

The Twenty-first Century

On a national and global level, “the worst is yet to come” describes the beginning of the twenty-first century and of the decade of the 2000s, during which a new disaster or crisis seemed to always be on the horizon.

First there was the Year 2000 (Y2K) alarm that predicted computers worldwide would crash at the stroke of midnight December 31, 1999, and throw us all into global financial chaos. Programmers almost universally had not taken into consideration the beginning of the new millennium, 2000, when digital clocks would roll over from 99 to 00. Worldwide, programmers scrambled to reprogram computer calendars and clocks. When midnight came, nothing happened.

In the first year of the new millennium, Republican George W. Bush, the son of President George H. W. Bush, defeated Al Gore for the presidency in the closest election since 1876. Bush won thirty states to Gore’s twenty, plus the District of Columbia, but Gore won the popular vote overall, only the fourth time in history that such a split had occurred. When Bush narrowly won Florida by five hundred thirty-seven votes out of six million cast, Gore challenged the canvassing board’s certification of the election. The Florida Supreme Court ordered a statewide vote recount, an action overturned by a 5-4 vote of the U.S. Supreme Court along what appeared to be party lines. A month after the election, Bush’s victory was validated. He had won the Electoral College vote. On January 20, 2001 he was inaugurated as our 43rd president.

Our new, and controversial, president had barely settled into the White House when, on the sunny morning of September 11, 2001, Islamic terrorists flew two hijacked airliners into the twin towers of New York’s World Trade Center and another into the Pentagon. A fourth hijacked airliner crashed in a Pennsylvania field when passengers, after learning of the earlier crashes on their cell phones, attempted to take control of the plane. The mission had been planned by Saudi national Osama bin Laden, leader of

the al-Qaeda terrorist organization then based in Afghanistan. The nineteen hijackers, fifteen of them Saudi citizens and the others from Egypt, United Arab Emirates, and Lebanon, had trained in al-Qaeda camps. Several received pilot training while living in Florida. None of the hijackers were citizens of Afghanistan, Iraq, or Iran.

Bush's retaliation for the 9/11 disaster came a month later in the form of a U.S./British action against the Taliban in Afghanistan, who had harbored bin Laden and his followers. This was the same Taliban the U.S. had trained and supplied as they fought against our Cold War enemy, Russia, which had occupied their country.

The Taliban government collapsed, and its leaders continued the fight from strongholds in the rugged mountains of Afghanistan. It would become the longest war ever fought by the U.S.. At one point, bin Laden was cornered in one of his hideouts, but the CIA and U.S. military forces failed to capture him, thanks to a foul-up in the upper chain of command.

Bin Laden was eventually located by the CIA and killed in Pakistan on May 1, 2011 (EDT). (*For complete coverage of the location of the finding of bin Laden and the CIA raid in which he was killed, see Appendix XII, Death of Osama bin Laden.*)

To make our nation's misery worse, in February 2003, seven astronauts died when the space shuttle Columbia exploded over Texas on reentry. Then, one month later, we engaged in yet another war. In March, Bush commenced the Second Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom. His action was taken on erroneous intelligence based on reports that Saddam Hussein's Iraqi government possessed weapons of mass destruction that threatened international security. A UN inspection team found no weapons of mass destruction during the invasion, and neither did the U.S.-led occupying forces. The invasion did result in the capture of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, who was executed after being convicted of crimes against humanity.

Wild and tumultuous storms and natural disasters world-wide caused havoc and devastation throughout many parts of the world in the 2000s. My own properties were not spared. In the summer of 2004, three separate hurricanes, Charley, Frances and Jeanne, swept through Polk County. All caused major damage to our

home on South Oakland Avenue. At Pretty Lake many trees were blown down damaging my farm house, even our condo at Cocoa Beach suffered water damage. A few weeks later, in the Caribbean, Hurricane Ivan roared across the Cayman Islands destroying my condo there.

Then, in December, a tsunami claimed an incredible 290,000 lives as it flooded villages from Sri Lanka to Indonesia. The following year, Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and the Gulf Coast in one of the country's worst natural disasters. As I write this in early 2011, New Orleans has still not fully recovered.

Then came the "housing bubble," which burst as bubbles often do. In the second half of the 1990s and the first half of the 2000s real estate values across the country soared. It was a time of easy credit, subprime mortgages, and adjustable-rate mortgages that allowed people to buy homes they couldn't really afford.

Questionable credit? No documentation? No problem. The iffy mortgages were bundled into investment packages that were eagerly bought up by institutions, relieving the original lending banks of any risk. It was a fee-driven frenzy that resulted in brokers, the nation's largest banks, and other institutions greedily financing speculative and very risky deals.

Today, judges are prohibiting lending institutions from closing on forfeited mortgages, because in most instances they cannot produce titles or mortgage documents. So much for the electronic processing used by the financial markets.

When the real estate market collapsed, those investment bundles became virtually worthless, triggering bank failures and forcing the federal government to bail out Bank of America and Wells Fargo, two of the nation's largest banks. The crisis rippled through the economy, leading to the loss of eight million jobs and federal bailouts of General Motors, Chrysler, and insurance giant American Insurance Group. In 2008 alone, the government allocated \$900 billion for special loans and bailouts. As this is written there are signs of recovery from the recession, but unemployment remains high, at 8.8 percent. The housing market has not yet recovered and construction of new homes is practically at a standstill.

George Bush's two terms in the White House were nearing an end when Americans, frustrated after eight years of crises, war, and financial insecurity, voted for change in 2008 by electing Democrat Barack Obama our 44th president. The young senator from Illinois had campaigned on a platform of change: Wall Street reform; health care for all; investment in education; immigration reform; and an early end to the war in Iraq. He and running mate, Senator Joe Biden, defeated war hero Senator John McCain and his running mate, Governor Sarah Palin of Alaska.

In a first for presidential campaigning, Obama made extensive use of the Internet and social-networking sites to reach young voters. In January 2009, Obama became the first African American to be sworn in as president of the United States and moved into the White House with his wife and two young daughters. Bush's frittering away the budget surpluses of his predecessor Bill Clinton left Obama saddled with a trillion dollars of new debt, the worst recession since the Great Depression, and two costly wars to finish. As I write this, those two wars are costing the U.S. \$2.8 billion a week.

In the summer of 1999, I had decided to charter a 163-foot yacht, the *Alteza*, to cruise the New England coastline with family and friends. We boarded the yacht in Nantucket and journeyed northward to Gloucester, Massachusetts, stopping at some of the more famous ports on the way: Martha's Vineyard, Cape Cod, and Boston. It was an expensive but delightful once-in-a-lifetime event.

The yacht had five staterooms for passengers, more for the crew. It was an easy fit for Michele, Fred, and Justin along with Andrea and Carl. After several days, they flew back to Florida. Paula and I had two days cruising alone before we were joined by our good friends Dale Jacobs and his girlfriend, Julie, John and Terry Frost, and Georgia and Bill Bull.

It was on this cruise that I gathered the family together to discuss getting a constitutional amendment approved by Florida voters to require the construction of a high-speed rail system in Florida. My interest in high-speed rail dated back to 1984, when then-governor Bob Graham convinced the legislature that it was a good idea. A Florida High Speed Rail Commission was created by statute, its seven members



Cruising the New England coastline aboard the Alteza.

charged with developing and implementing a system that would connect Miami, Orlando, and Tampa. A study by Barton Ashmon Associates estimated the cost of construction at \$2.3 to \$2.7 billion. Ridership was estimated at six million per year. The report concluded that the money could be raised through land developments at and around station locations, benefit assessment districts, and tax increment financing.

In 1986, a vacancy opened up on the commission and I was appointed to fill it by Governor Bob Martinez, whom I had helped during his campaign. In 1988, members of the commission visited Sweden, Germany, and France to look at the high-speed rail systems operating there. I actually got to sit at the controls of the Swedish-built ABX2000.

The first leg of the system would run from Orlando to Miami. The optimistic hope that it could be financed with no public funding was without foundation. One of the companies that had submitted a proposal—Florida TGV, which would use the French TGV train—withdrawn because of lack of support for public funding. The Florida High Speed Rail Corporation, a group of land developers, was selected to build the project. It soon became apparent that a gas tax or some other tax would have to be approved by the legislature to provide public funding. And the support just wasn't there for a new tax.

In 1991, Governor Lawton Chiles, who had been elected in 1990, killed the project. Later, with the governor's approval, the Florida Legislature resurrected high-speed rail and approved funding of \$70 million a year for thirty years.

Proposals to design, build, operate, and maintain the system were solicited. The Florida Overland Express Consortium (FOX), made up of Fluor-Daniel, Odebrecht Contractors, Bombardier, and GEC Alsthom, won out. Capital costs for the Miami leg were now estimated at \$6.1 billion with a ridership of 8.5 million per year predicted.

In 1998, we elected a new governor, Jeb Bush, who refused to spend the money allocated for high-speed rail and convinced the legislature to allow him to spend it instead on airports, seaports, and roads. The effort was again killed.

My interest never waned. I was convinced that a high-speed rail system would eventually be built in Florida, connecting every region of the state. The problem, as I saw it, was that we did not have the continuity of political will to get it done. I had been

involved in the constitutional amendment effort to limit political terms in Florida to eight consecutive years in the same office. I knew how the process worked, and now I became convinced that the only way a rail system would ever be built in Florida was through a constitutional amendment requiring its construction approved by the voters. Paula, Carl, Michele, Fred, and Andrea, on board the yacht, listened to me lay out my plan. They excitedly approved. I would start the ball rolling immediately after we came home from our cruise.

I contacted my good friend, advisor, and pollster David Hill of Hill Research, The Woodlands, Texas, and John Sowinski of Consensus Communications, Winter Park, Florida. I had worked with both of them on the Eight Is Enough campaign to limit the terms of elected officials in Florida. David Hill would be in charge of polling and conducting focus group sessions to determine whether we had a chance of convincing Florida voters to pass a constitutional amendment requiring the construction of a high-speed rail system. Sowinski would be in charge of hiring a staff to gather signed petitions from Florida voters asking that the question be put on the November 2000 ballot. Each petition would have to be verified by the county elections supervisor where the petition signer resided.

I hired former Florida Supreme Court justice Stephen Grimes to help write the constitutional amendment and the ballot summary, which would have to be approved by the Florida Supreme Court. During the administration of Governor Bob Martinez, I had played a key role in getting Justice Grimes appointed to the supreme court. In a highly unusual move, Governor Martinez had asked me to interview Grimes, a Lakeland native who was serving at the Second District Court of Appeals headquartered in Lakeland. I did and recommended that Governor Martinez appoint him to the Florida Supreme Court.

The language of the constitutional amendment reads:

Article X, Section 19, Florida Constitution, is hereby created to read as follows:

High Speed Ground Transportation System.

To reduce traffic congestion and provide alternatives to the traveling public, it is hereby declared to be in the public interest that a high-speed ground transportation system

consisting of a monorail, fixed guideway or magnetic levitation system, capable of speeds in excess of 120 miles per hour, be developed and operated in the State of Florida to provide high-speed ground transportation by innovative, efficient and effective technologies consisting of dedicated rails or guideways separated from motor vehicular traffic that will link the five largest urban areas of the State as determined by the Legislature and provide for access to existing air and ground transportation facilities and services. The Legislature, the Cabinet and the Governor are hereby directed to proceed with the development of such a system by the State and/or by a private entity pursuant to state approval and authorization, including the acquisition of right-of-way, the financing of design and construction of the system, and the operation of the system, as provided by specific appropriation and by law, with construction to begin on or before November 1, 2003.

The ballot summary reads:

To reduce traffic and increase travel alternatives, this amendment provides for the development of a high-speed monorail, fixed guideway or magnetic levitation system linking Florida's five largest urban areas and providing for access to existing air and ground transportation facilities and services by directing the state and/or state authorized private entity to implement the financing, acquisition of right-of-way, design, construction, and operation of the system, with construction beginning by November 1, 2003.

A ballot summary, by constitutional amendment, is limited to seventy-five words. The constitution also requires that an amendment be limited to a single subject. Later in the process, the state attorney general, the Florida Chamber of Commerce, and Associated Industries of Florida would attack the constitutional amendment on both fronts.

I had formed a nonprofit corporation, Floridians for 21st Century Travel Connections and Choices, to be the vehicle for getting the amendment enacted. The secretary of state accepted the corporation and the filing papers on August 24, 1999. On September 8, 1999, the Department of State approved a format of the initiative.

Through Sowinski I hired Rick Arnold, a professional petition signature-gathering firm, to commence gathering petitions. Based on a percentage of the number of people who had voted in the last statewide general election, we determined that we would need 435,329 certified signature petitions of registered voters in the state of Florida.

On February 16, 2000, Secretary of State Katherine Harris certified to Attorney General Bob Butterworth that we had collected 493,756 valid petitions from voters in twenty-one of the twenty-three Florida congressional districts.

On March 14, 2000, Butterworth forwarded the petition to the chief justice of the Florida Supreme Court, the Honorable Major B. Harding. As required by law, Butterworth asked the court to render an opinion as to the validity of the initiative “petition circulated pursuant to Article 11, Section 3, The Florida Constitution.” His six-page letter raised several questions based on the constitution and previous rulings of the Supreme Court. But he did not raise an objection, which he would later do. He was an opponent of the amendment.

The Supreme Court on March 16, 2000, ordered that all interested parties file their briefs on or before April 5, 2000. Answer briefs were to be filed before April 25. On my behalf, Justice Grimes filed our briefs in support of the amendment. At the same time, we asked for an expedited hearing to be rendered no later than June 2000 in time for the wording to be placed on the general election ballot. The date coincided with the beginning of the summer recess of the court. We argued that it would make it difficult for the initiative to be properly placed on the November 2000 ballot if the court’s opinion was delayed beyond that period.

On July 16, 2000, Justice Grimes filed, on my behalf, supplemental information to the oral argument before the court. As Justice Grimes told the court, “The high-speed ground transportation initiative was in an unusual posture because no opposing briefs had been filed.” While the attorney general had posed certain issues, that office took no position with the respect to the validity of the initiative. However, several of the court’s questions appeared to go beyond these issues. Grimes addressed each question the court had raised—to the satisfaction of the court—as we would later learn.



Here I have the pleasure of signing the first petition for high speed rail and delivering it to Polk County Supervisor of Elections Lori Edwards.

On August 16, the Department of State informed me that it had certified that the requisite number of valid petitions had been met, and we were assigned Amendment Number One for the upcoming general election ballot.

On October 3, the court ruled: "There is no bar to placing the proposed amendment on the ballot. It is so ordered." The order by the Supreme Court also noted: "No motion for rehearing will be allowed." In the 6-1 decision, Justices Wells, Shaw, Anstead, Pariente, Lewis, and Quince concurred. Justice Harding dissented.

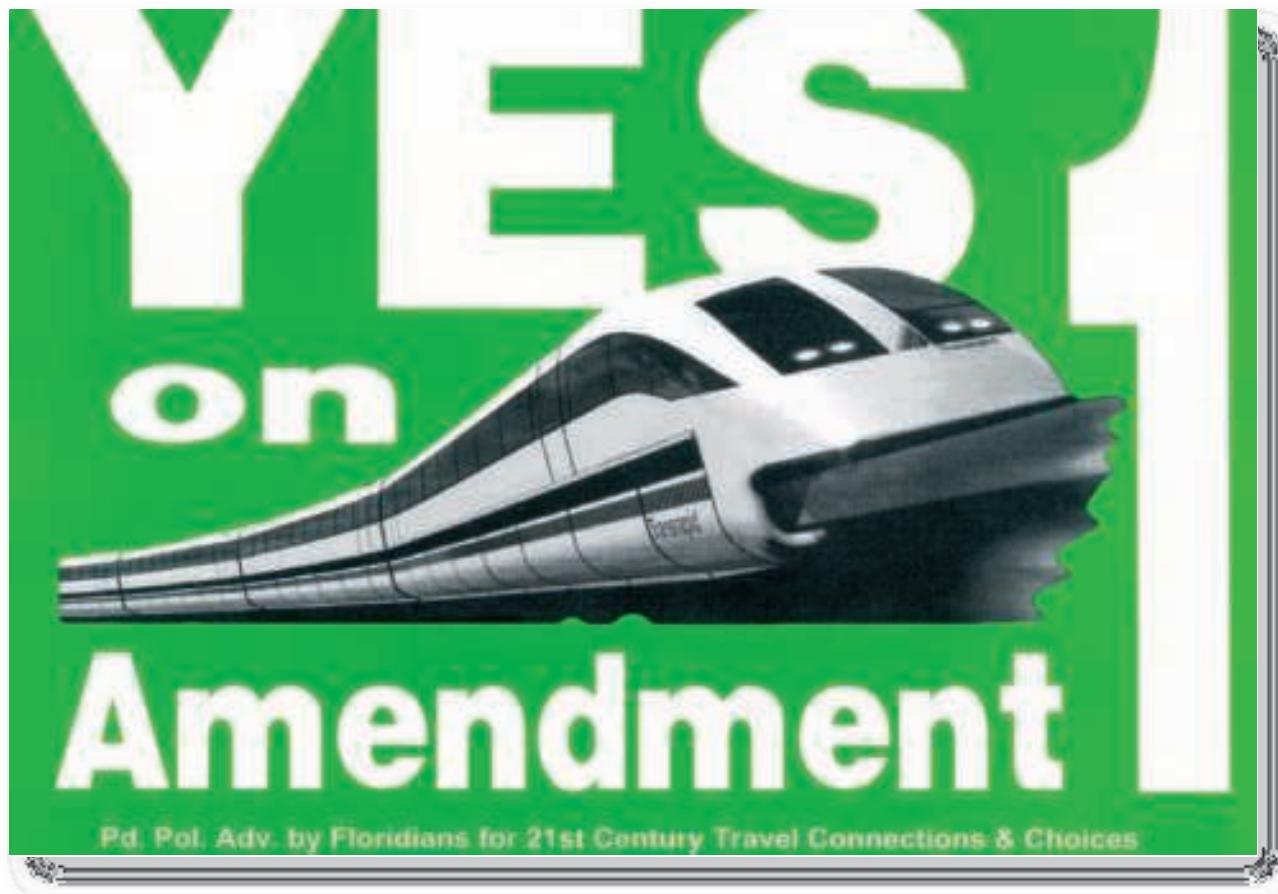
Notwithstanding the court's admonition that there would not be a rehearing, the attorney general, on October 12, asked for a rehearing or clarification of the court's opinion. In the request, Butterworth showed his true colors; he was adamantly opposed to placing the constitutional amendment on the ballot. Justice Grimes, on my behalf, argued: "Petitioners' vagueness argument is without merit and is beyond the scope of this proceeding." Butterworth was joined in his request by the Florida Chamber of Commerce and Floridians for Responsible Transportation Planning Inc., an arm of the Florida Road Builders group.

With the election a little more than two weeks away, in a unanimous decision the court ruled: "Petition for leave to intervene filed by the Florida Chamber of Commerce and Floridians for Responsible Transportation Planning is hereby denied." At the same time, the court notified the attorney general that his motion too was "hereby denied."

Still this did not silence the opponents. On October 19, the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Floridians for Responsible Transportation Planning Inc., Associated Industries of Florida, Lee Vause, a citizen and taxpayer, the Florida Transportation Builders Association, the Economic Council of Palm Beach County Inc, Derail the Bullet Train Inc, and Underground Utility Contractors of Florida filed a petition for a writ of mandamus with the court. The petition said, in part: "If it is too late to remove the initiative from the ballot, petitioners request that the court declare the election results null and void."

The court said no.

During this turbulent battle in the courts, we were preparing a last-minute, one-week TV blitz, distribution of bumper stickers, and signs for people to wave on Election Day,



November 7, urging a "YES vote on Amendment One."

The \$1.25 million TV campaign coupled with other expenses, legal, travel, printing, polling, and focus groups now brought my investment in Florida's future to well over \$2.5 million—a million dollars more than I and the other members of my team had estimated when we commenced our work in the fall of 1999.

I had no interest or opportunity to gain financially from the amendment, despite allegations from opponents and many news organizations.

On November 7, we won, with 53 percent of the voters siding with us. It was a tough battle, but a worthy one.

Optimistically, I thought that the passage of the constitutional amendment would guarantee the building of a high-speed rail system throughout Florida. My wife, Paula, now a member of the Florida House of Representatives, correctly reminded me that implementing legislation would be needed and that I would have to lead the

effort for that legislation.

Within days after the election, Paula and I ran into Jeb Bush and his entourage in Tallahassee for a Florida State University football game. Without offering any congratulations, Jeb opined that I would need a good lobbyist to help with implementing the effort. Former house speaker John Thrasher was in the governor's entourage, and Jeb recommended that I hire him. Thrasher was joining Southern Strategies, a lobbying firm which included the husband of Sally Bradshaw, who had been a Jeb strategist and campaign director for many years and who was now serving as his chief of staff.

I hired Thrasher and Southern Strategies for \$10,000 a month. Beth Gosnell, Richard Coates, and Tom Slade rounded out my team. The Fluor Corporation, which had been the successful bidder on the FOX project, agreed to help by hiring Bill Rubin and Betty Steffens who had worked on the FOX project.

During the 2001 session of the Florida Legislature, Paula and our good friend Representative Dennis Ross led the effort to enact implementing legislation in the Florida House. Senator John Laurent, an enthusiastic supporter, would sponsor our bill in the Florida Senate. Even though Jeb's good friend John Thrasher was on our team, Jeb opposed the legislation. He was a consistent opponent, always raising the bar for proponents of high-speed rail.

The Florida Legislature passed the High Speed Rail Act, creating a nine-member Authority with wide-ranging powers to build the high-speed rail system. The governor, the president of the Senate, and the speaker of the House would appoint three members each. Paula and I asked Jeb to name me as one of his appointees. No way—he felt that with me on the Authority we might actually get something done. Senator John Laurent asked Senate President John McKay to appoint me. McKay said, "Anything that John wants, John gets," and I was appointed.

Two of the senate president's appointees, Bill Dunn of Miami and I, were the only members of the Authority who favored high-speed rail. The others candidly admitted that they had voted against the amendment. However, several of the members wanted me to serve as chairman of the Authority. The day of our first meeting, the member who

was going to nominate me for chairman, John Browning, pulled me aside and said that Jeb was adamantly opposed to me being chairman and that Jeb's choice was Tallahassee attorney Fred Dudley. It was a done deal. Jeb had convinced the other members to elect Fred.

It took a few months, but ultimately eight of the nine Authority members, including our chairman, became ardent supporters of high-speed rail. At a fall meeting of the Authority, we adopted a long-term Vision Plan—to connect five major urban areas, which had been defined by our legislation as Northwest Florida, Northeast Florida, Central Florida, Southwest Florida, and South Florida.

Over Jeb's objections, the 2001 session of the Florida Legislature approved several million dollars for our budget to move forward.

With the help of U.S. Representative Adam Putnam, my representative, and U.S. Senator Bill Nelson, we were able to get federal earmarks for additional funding to do our planning and preliminary engineering work and to commence the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) studies, a must for getting federal approval to build the system.

In 2004, Jeb mounted an effort to get a proposal on the ballot to remove the constitutional mandate for a high-speed rail system. He and the state's chief financial officer, Tom Gallagher, raised millions of dollars from corporations and friends to whom they had granted political favors. They succeeded in having the constitutional amendment mandating high-speed rail removed.

Jeb then began lobbying the Florida Legislature to repeal the High Speed Rail Act, still on the books, that required the high-speed rail system to be built, commencing with the leg connecting Orlando and Tampa. Largely through the efforts of Paula, who was now serving in the Senate, Jeb was unsuccessful. By this time the Authority had moved into position to select a preferred vendor and complete the NEPA work. The consortium of Fluor-Bombardier was selected to build the first segment of high-speed rail, but without the funding nothing happened. Jeb left office in January 2007. In 2009, the High Speed Rail Authority resumed its work using \$3 million left over from the federal funding,

which was still at the federal level. We requested that it be allocated to the Florida Department of Transportation. It was—and we were back on track.

Barack Obama had been elected president in 2008. During his campaign, he had articulated his vision for a high-speed rail system linking the entire nation, much the way President Eisenhower's interstate system linked the country together in the 1950s. At the new president's urging, in 2009, Congress approved \$8 billion in economic stimulus funds to commence work on his vision plan during the fall. The Authority made an application to the Federal Railway Administration (FRA) for \$2.6 billion to design, build, maintain, and operate a high-speed rail system within the Tampa-to-Orlando corridor.

In the spring of 2010, President Obama and Vice President Joe Biden came to Tampa to announce that Florida was being approved for a grant of \$1.25 billion to commence work on the Tampa/Orlando leg. During the fall of 2010, FRA approved a grant of an additional \$1 billion that required Florida to pony up a 20 percent match.

In December 2010, when the newly elected governors of Ohio and Wisconsin announced that they would not support high-speed rail in their states, FRA secretary Ray LaHood withdrew more than \$1.2 billion funds previously allocated to those two states. He reallocated the money to other states, including \$342.3 million to Florida. This meant that Florida's \$2.6 billion project was nearly 90 percent funded by the FRA.

During the 2010 November elections, Rick Scott, a Republican multimillionaire who funded most of his own campaign to the tune of \$75 million, became Florida's governor-elect. He expressed reservations about accepting stimulus money in a debate with Democratic gubernatorial candidate Alex Sink, a fervent supporter of high-speed rail.

Scott continued to express reservations about high speed rail, insisting that he must see a feasibility study before making a decision. I had urged FDOT to do a feasibility study starting back in May when Scott first mentioned it. Despite my continued nagging, FDOT still did not have a feasibility study by the time Scott was sworn in as governor in January. In mid-January, I was told by those working on the feasibility study that it would be ready in early February.

On February 16, Scott announced that he was not accepting the federal grants and that high speed rail would not be built. He did not wait for the feasibility study although he knew it was available in draft form. He did not want to see it. He knew that it would be a good deal for the citizens of Florida and the traveling visitors to our wonderful sunshine state.

His announcement came as somewhat of a shock to Paula and me. He had told Paula in a meeting in the Governor's Mansion in mid-January that he would go forward with high speed rail. He lied.

The end of the Florida high speed rail project connecting Tampa to Orlando was summed up very well by the following editorial which ran in the Tampa Tribune on March 14:

“Gov. Rick Scott rejected funding for high-speed rail in Florida because he didn’t believe the private ridership study that projected it would operate at a profit.

“He also didn’t trust the federal promise that state taxpayers were not at risk. He didn’t believe business leaders that it would be an economic boon. He had no faith in the construction bids that would have come from private companies.

“His inflexible skepticism of rail is celebrated by his supporters as proof he has the courage of his convictions. A conviction unaffected by all contradictory evidence also suggests arrogance.

“The state had contracted a scientific review of the feasibility of high-speed rail from Tampa to Orlando. At a price of \$1.3 million, the study was to be a policy guide — more than a good guess but less than a guarantee.

“Wilbur Smith Associates and Steer Davies Gleave projected that in its first year the train line would have 3.3 million riders and produce an operating profit of \$10.2 million. By the 10th year, the operating surplus would be up to \$28.6 million.

“Not waiting for the study to be released, Scott told the federal government that unless it agreed to spend it on something Scott approved of, it could keep the \$2.4 billion Florida had been awarded for the project. No matter what anyone said or what private investors were willing to kick in, Scott didn’t want an Obama-sponsored train in his state.

“But it’s also easy to see how a fast train could make a profit for a competent operator, as industry experts have long said it would. Remember, the money for the infrastructure would not have to be repaid from operational revenue. It would not be like a toll road that must repay the bondholders who finance it.

“The federal government would have paid for the track. (Which is to say Florida would get more of its federal fuel taxes back.) The state would provide free right-of-way, again, already paid for by taxpayers.

“Companies were, in fact, eager to bid on the opportunity to build and operate the train. They know that rail travel would be most appealing during peak hours when I-4 traffic is at its worst. They also expect fuel prices to increase.

“Scott’s doubts that rail is feasible mirror the skepticism of the Paris edition of the New York Herald, which a few years after the Wright brothers had made the first powered airplane flight, wrote: “They are in fact fliers or liars. It is difficult to fly. It’s easy to say, ‘We have flown.’”

“It is also easy to say, the Tampa-Orlando train will operate in the black. But how can Scott be so sure it can’t?

“Scott’s arbitrary handling of the issue says he doesn’t want more information. He assumes the private investors, just like the train experts hired by the state and everyone else supporting the project, are miscalculating.

“Scott is sending an early message that he doesn’t plan to govern in an open, deliberative way. To him, nothing matters more than his personal ideology.

“It’s an incautious and potentially costly way to run a state.”

I agree with the Tribune!

Scott’s arrogance reminded me of a conversation I had with former Governor Jeb Bush about implementing the constitutional amendment to require the construction of a high speed rail system in Florida. As Jeb’s opposition became more apparent and aggressive I asked him about violating his oath of office to protect and defend the Constitution of Florida. His response was, “What is the penalty?” I left him thinking that surely there must be a penalty for failure to abide by the oath of office, which he swore

to uphold at his first inauguration with one hand on the Holy Bible.

One of my attorneys, David Cardwell of Orlando, reported to me that, unfortunately, there was no penalty. This was in the summer of 2002. Again, I went to my friend, advisor, and pollster David Hill. I was determined to test public opinion in Florida to determine whether registered voters believed that there should be a penalty for the failure of elected officials to uphold the oath of office.

With the help of Justice Grimes, we crafted the first draft of the Oath of Office Enforcement Act. The language follows:

Any member of the Legislature or Cabinet found guilty of violating the oath of office by refusing to carry out or seeking to prevent the implementation of a mandate of the Florida Constitution or its amendments as approved by voters, shall, in addition to any other penalties, forfeit the office, be barred from elected or appointed Florida public office and fined. Enforcement is through civil action by Attorney General, state attorney or citizen.

When David polled Florida registered voters, they approved of the amendment by 74 percent to 19 percent, with 6 percent unsure. Because the preliminary wording of the proposed amendment called for penalties for violations, voters were asked to rate various examples of these.

<i>How Appealing Is the Following Punishment?</i>			
Politician in violation would be...	“Very”	“Somewhat”	“Not Very”
Immediately removed from office	65%	22%	12%
Barred from seeking/holding office again	60%	21%	17%
Assessed a financial penalty	47%	30%	21%
All of the above simultaneously	51%	28%	18%

With this encouraging public opinion poll, we finalized the text of the proposed amendment to read:

Any person who is a member of the Legislature, or who is a statewide elected executive branch officer, who is found guilty of violating his or her oath of office by refusing to carry out, or attempting to impede implementation of any provision of the Florida Constitution, shall forfeit his or her office and be barred from any Florida public office, whether elected or appointed, for a period of six years.

This section shall be enforced by a civil action brought by the Attorney General, a state attorney, or any citizen.

With the help of Justice Grimes and David, we agreed that the ballot summary would read:

Any member of the Legislature or a statewide elected executive branch officer who is found guilty of violating the oath of office by refusing to carry out, or attempting to impede implementation of any provision of the Florida Constitution, shall forfeit the office and be barred from elected or appointed Florida public office for six years. Enforcement shall be through civil action brought by the Attorney General, a state attorney, or any citizen.

The amendment language was approved by Secretary of State Glenda E. Hood. We were operating under the title of Citizens for Public Integrity, a nonprofit corporation. We would be required to collect 488,722 valid petitions. Our collection process began. I was the first to sign the petition, in the office of Polk County elections supervisor Lori Edwards, one of the few elected officials who supported the amendment.

It wasn't long before Paula, a member of the Florida Legislature, began getting a lot of flack from elected officials asking, "What does Doc want to do—put us all in jail?"

As the weeks dragged by, it became apparent that the county supervisors of elections were being very slow to certify the petitions. Additionally, after we collected

more than the required number of petitions certified by county supervisors of elections and submitted to the secretary of state, I believe that there were evil forces blocking our efforts. Days, then weeks, went by without our receiving the certification by Secretary of State Glenda Hood, a Jeb appointee, that would put us in a position to forward the petition to the attorney general for review. Elected officials in power seemed determined to grind our effort to a halt. At the same time, Paula continued to be berated by fellow members of the Legislature.

Reluctantly, I recognized that the effort to get the amendment on the ballot was fruitless, despite the overwhelming support of the voters.

Much of the money I have spent on lobbying for high-speed rail, the constitutional amendment, and the oath of office amendment came as a result of my very successful business ventures, Summit Consulting, Inc., and Crossroads Insurance Company Ltd.

As 2002 rolled onto my calendar, Crossroads was continuing to operate out of Bermuda. Gulf Insurance was located in Grand Cayman. A portion of the Crossroads reinsurance agreements had been retroceded to Gulf. We had voluntarily given up our licenses in Florida and Louisiana. It seemed that the prudent thing to do was to merge—or, as the Bermudians titled it, to do an amalgamation agreement—with Gulf, effectively transferring all the assets of Crossroads to Gulf along with all the outstanding liabilities.

We executed the amalgamation agreement in October of 2002. This relieved us of ongoing management and licensing expenses in Bermuda. This move had been previously discussed with Rick Hodges, president of Summit Consulting, who had no objection to the amalgamation. Claims payments submitted by Summit would now be paid by Gulf Insurance out of Grand Cayman. As the number of open claims continued to decrease, we decided in 2007 to aggressively pursue lump-sum claims settlements for the few outstanding cases we had with the Florida Retail Federation and the Employers Self Insurers Funds. We were successful in agreeing to a dollar value with Rick for lump-sum claims payments, which would erase our liability for future payment of claims to either of the funds.

Our next step was to place Gulf Insurance into voluntary liquidation with the approval

of the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority, which monitored insurance companies. On June 19, 2007, we appointed independent liquidators and authorized them to distribute the company's assets to the shareholders, depending on the number of shares held by each—Michele Jones, Carl Dockery, Mavis Dockery, Paula Dockery, and me.

It had been a great learning experience for me to have been an underwriter at Lloyds and president and CEO of Summit, Crossroads, and Gulf. Also, it had been very profitable for me and my family. But there was a touch of sadness in my heart as we lifted our glasses of champagne to toast the successful end of our association with these organizations.

There was never a lack of excitement or purpose in my life. With the help of the good Lord, I have enjoyed reasonably good health, which enabled me to pursue many activities, including fishing and hunting, mostly quail, pheasant, and ducks.

Advancing birthdays didn't seem to catch up with me until 2005, when I turned seventy-two. It was beginning to take me longer to recover from minor lapses of good health. Walking the fields hunting for pheasant and quail was not as easy as it used to be.

In August of 2004, I had to have a pacemaker installed because of an irregular heartbeat. At about the same time, I was beginning to have a problem with my left knee. The cartilage was slowly wearing away. Orthopedic surgeons advised me to wait until the pain was no longer bearable before I had a knee replacement. With the help of Celebrex and Vioxx (which was taken off the market on the order of the federal government), I was controlling the pain very well until January 2009, when it became necessary for me to use a cane.

After interviewing three orthopedic surgeons, I settled on Dr. Samuel Messieh of Davenport and the Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center for the operation. Paula had recommended Dr. Messieh highly and, as it turned out, he was the best choice. My left knee was replaced on July 29, 2009.

A year earlier, on my seventy-fifth birthday, we were celebrating at Charlie's Steak House in Tampa when I had a very painful gall bladder attack. Early the next morning I

went to the emergency room at Lakeland Regional Medical Center. Doctors examined me, released me, and told me that they would keep me under observation. Two days later, I was back in the emergency room and was admitted to the hospital for the removal of my gall bladder.

In 2009, a bout with kidney stones put me out of commission for a while. At about the same time, my dermatologist told me I had a cancerous growth on my nose. She recommended a specialist, who took the cancer out, leaving a small scar that adds a bit more character to my face. Within the same time period, I was diagnosed with a bleeding prostate. It started on Christmas Day 2009 while Paula and I were at our home in North Carolina. Two days afterward it cleared up. But a few months later, while we were on vacation in Grand Cayman, the bleeding became worse. After three days, we returned to Florida. A couple of days later, my urologist cauterized the area from which the bleeding was coming. That and new medication seems to have solved the problem.

It took five months for my knee to get back to ninety-five percent of normal. Thankfully, I haven't had any problems with the knee since then. Two of my very good friends were not fortunate enough to have an orthopedic surgeon as good as Dr. Messieh. They had to go back for do-overs, and one of them for a second do-over that still did not correct the problem.

Sadly, in 2003, I lost my brother, Ken. He had been ailing for several years with emphysema and heart problems and was not able to get around comfortably. His doctor had urged him to take it easy and give up long trips. Ken's response was, "What do you want me to do? Die sitting in a chair watching Oprah Winfrey?" He didn't stop traveling. He took a trip to Russia and after a few days in Moscow he spent ten days on a luxury river cruise, where he became friends with the crew and many of his fellow travelers. That was typical of him—he'd always been a guy with an outgoing personality, fun to be with at any time, and he made friends wherever he went.

His last trip was a cruise to Alaska on the inland passage from Vancouver, Canada, to Seward. He was flying home from Alaska and died of a heart attack as he was being seated for a connecting flight in Ohio, just two months before his birthday in July when

he would have turned sixty-nine. At his request, he was buried with full military honors in the National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida.

Just nineteen months later, my mother died at eighty-eight years of age. At her request, services were held in Elkin, North Carolina, where I was born and where she had spent so many years growing up and working at the Chatham Manufacturing Company. She was buried in the Friendship Baptist Church graveyard about eight miles east of Elkin alongside her beloved Carl, who had died in 1990; her mother, Victoria Hurt; her sister Hilda; her father, Henry Croffard Hurt; and her aunt, DeEtte Greenwood.

By preference, Mom had been living at the Oakbridge nursing home in Lakeland when she died. Earlier, she had executed a living will, ordering no resuscitation and no tube feeding. Near the end, as she weakened, her doctor wanted to move her to the local hospital, Lakeland Regional Medical Center, but she said no. Her doctor was a very nice person but didn't understand my mother's religious faith. When Mom would say to him, and to me and Paula, that she wanted to go home, he didn't understand that she was talking about going to her heavenly home "to be with Jesus." She knew that he didn't understand and asked me to explain it to him. I did, but not being of the Christian faith, the doctor may not have really understood. Mom quit eating and would drink very little water. Thanks to the staff, Dene, Paula, and other family members, her lips were moistened frequently. Dene was the family member who was there holding her hand when she began her journey to her heavenly home to be with Jesus.

As 2010 came up on our calendar, Paula was being urged by thousands of supporters to enter the race for Florida's governor. She was still in the state Senate, where she had served eight years after serving four years in the Florida House. Attorney General Bill McCollum had been ordained by the establishment as the Republican gubernatorial candidate. Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink, a good friend of ours, was running on the Democratic ticket. The mood of the state and the country was anti-establishment. Would-be voters were beginning to clamor for someone who would shake up the status quo.

Paula fit that mold perfectly. Her independent voice in the Senate was not



Family and friends join Mom for one of the birthday parties we held for her at the Oakbridge nursing home before she died on December 6, 2004. She was a great, loving mother and grandmother. I tried to get Mom to let us hire help to take care of her at home but this strong-willed woman was determined to get into a nursing home. She was first in the assisted living area next to the nursing home. Her doctor would not certify her for the nursing home. But she found out that if she missed five days of not getting out of bed and going to eat in the dining room she would be required to move into the nursing home. So, guess what? She stayed in bed and six days later she was moved to the nursing home!

In the picture, in front seated either side of Mom are Justin and Alicia (Vickie's daughter, with her baby). The rest of us, from left, are: Ken, me, Michele, Matthew (Brian's son), Carl, Brian, his sister Vickie, Kristin (Vickie's daughter), Mom's cousin Verna Binkley and two friends.

appreciated by the leadership, but other members of the Legislature and the people in her five-county district loved her outspoken style and agreed with her stand on many if not all the issues of the day.

McCollum was a friend whom I had supported going back to his first run for the U.S. Congress, but he was never an exciting or inspiring candidate, although he was a competent, friendly politician. In late 2009, Paula decided to challenge McCollum in the Republican primary. She was cheered on by the thousands who had urged her to run. Most of the media liked her for her honesty, integrity, and willingness to buck the establishment.

The campaign and fund-raising were under way. Unfortunately, on the fund-raising side of the campaign she hit an obstacle. She was not permitted to solicit or accept campaign donations during legislative committee weeks or during the legislative session. The same rules did not apply to McCollum, because he was not a member of the Legislature. Even so, we raised enough money, nearly \$400,000, for a TV media buy in the Tampa Bay market. The same week Paula debuted on Bay Area screens, like a bolt of lightning out of the blue, Rick Scott (worth \$300 million) announced his candidacy and spent \$1.7 million for a statewide TV blitz. The unknown former CEO of Columbia HCA, with no experience in political office, vowed that he would spend \$25 million, if necessary, in an effort to win the Republican primary.

Reluctantly, Paula and I acknowledged that we would never be able to compete with that kind of money. McCollum, at that time, had raised just under \$10 million. David Hill, Paula's senior political advisor, had estimated that she could be a serious contender against McCollum if we could raise \$4 million.

In late May 2010, Paula pulled out of the race. Scott contacted her immediately. They became good friends, and she was at one time under consideration to be his running mate for lieutenant governor. Historically, the lieutenant governor has had a very small role in the Florida governor's administrations. Paula decided against that and asked Scott to withdraw her name from consideration. Scott would end up spending \$70 million of his personal fortune to win the primary and then the general

election in November. Paula and a few other of his trusted friends were named to his Transition Advisory Committee.

Paula would have made a great governor. I'm very proud of her. Many of her friends continue to remind her of that but are very happy with her decision to stay in the Florida Senate where she has two more years to serve, bringing her length of public service to sixteen years.

One of the happier events at the beginning of the twenty-first century occurred on January 30, 2004 when Andrea and Carl presented me with my newborn granddaughter, Katharine Grant Dockery. Now, besides Justin, Michele's son, I have a beautiful and talented young lady to call me Papa.

At seventy-seven, I still enjoy reasonably good health. It's just that the strenuous pheasant and quail hunts have to be tempered with good judgment on my part. Duck hunting is as good as ever, since we walk out to the blinds in flooded fields and sit there until the ducks fly in.

My life has been a wonderful adventure for which I thank the Lord, my family, and friends. I look forward to facing and embracing the next decade with enthusiasm, purpose, and perseverance.

Scrapbook From The Twenty-first Century

This is the front of our home on South Oakland Avenue in Lakeland. It's a three-bedroom home with two bedrooms upstairs and a master bedroom downstairs, as well as an exercise room downstairs. It is surrounded by several gardenia bushes. When they are in full bloom the lovely gardenia fragrance surrounds the house.



On the north side of the house I added a pool/bar room about eight years ago. In addition to the regulation size pool table there's a poker table which seats six players, shown in the bottom left corner of the picture.



The backyard is lavishly landscaped with a small pool. The steps to the right side of the pool lead up to a spa. The front of the pool is separated from the back of the pool by a large gray rock formation. A waterfall to the right of the rocks leads to the back end of the pool. The water also flows over and down to crevasses in the rock pile. I confess that I had a big hand in the design of the landscaping and the pool. The artificial rocks were built by two "moonlighting" landscaping guys from Disney World.

Another wonderful hunt in 2008 at Thunderstik with Carl, grandson Justin and Comet, Carl's dog.



Greg Branch owns this home in Montana, about an hour's drive south of Bozeman on the way to Yellowstone National Park. In 2009 he invited me and other friends for a driven pheasant hunt. That's Greg seated on the front porch to the right. I'm seated in a chair to the left of Greg.

This is the Tobacco Stick Lodge near Cambridge, Maryland. The lodge is owned by my friend Tom Boggs who has invited me there for eighteen consecutive years for duck and geese hunting.



This is a blind which will house three hunters as we wait for the ducks to fly back in from the Choptank. The entrance is on the left end. This view is from the back side of the blind. On the front side there is an opening which allows us to stand up and shoot as the ducks come in. There's a bench seat running the length of the blind.

To the right are decoys used to attract the ducks.



Here I am enjoying a drink with Tom, center, and Scott Hughes, Tom's manager of Tobacco Stick. Early each spring Tom and Scott release more than four thousand mallard ducklings on their four hundred acre hunting preserve. The ducklings are grain fed throughout the summer and early fall. Two weeks before the hunting season opens, fields which were planted with grain are flooded. The ducks immediately move into the flooded field from the nearby Choptank River.



*Justin with Carl and me in Chub Cay, Bahamas with one of the
large bull dolphins we caught that day.*



My first visit to the Oktoberfest in Munchen, Germany, was in 1952 when I was stationed in Bavaria. I arrived with my buddy at noon.

We spent the next ten to twelve hours drinking beer and dancing polkas with the beautiful frauleins of Munchen.

We partied with an elderly German couple who brought sausages, rolls and cheese with them. They shared their food with us and we bought the beer for them.

Since then, I've been back to the Oktoberfest eight times. This photo was taken at the 2003 Oktoberfest in the Hacker-Pschorr tent. With Carl, Paula and me are Carl's friends

Laura Hawley and Kelly Zarvas.



In addition to the dozen or so beer tents, there are numerous rides and side shows. Here we are at the entrance to the Oktoberfest.

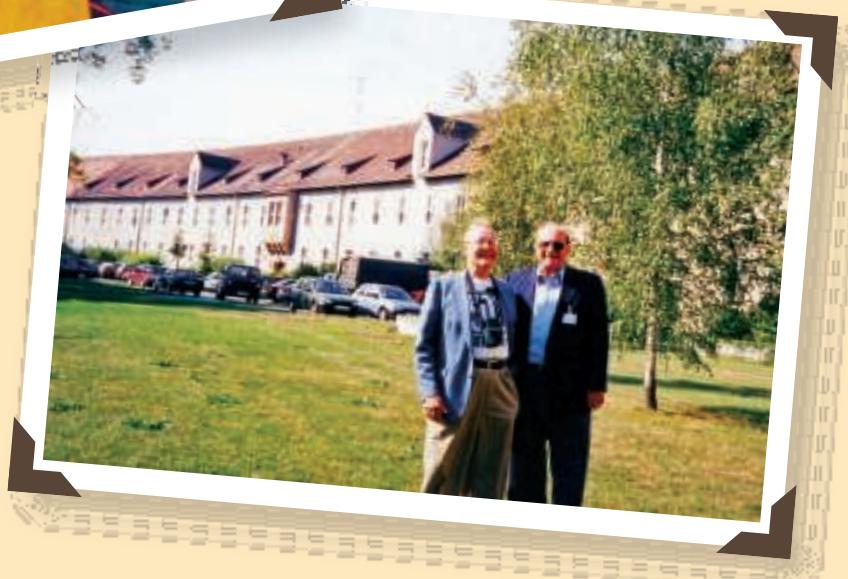
Just prior to the opening of the Oktoberfest a two-hour parade winds its way through the center of Munchen, to the delight of thousands of visitors. Cities from all over Germany are represented in the parade with colorfully decorated floats, marching bands and dancing frauleins.



When in Munchen we visit English Park where hundreds of people gather each afternoon and evening during the summer months to drink, eat and make merry. Entertainment is provided by an oom-pah-pah band at the China bandstand.



These are the barracks John and I lived in while we were stationed at Landsberg.



Here Paula and I are visiting an Oktoberfest with Jean and John Croxton, a buddy of mine from the fifties when we were stationed in Germany. John took the picture.

African Trip – Spring 2000



In May, 2000 I would commence my fifth trip to Africa, this time with Paula, Carl and Andrea. We left Tampa on May 14 for Amsterdam, Holland, with a change of planes in New York City. We arrived in Amsterdam early the next morning for a two-day visit. This photo was taken at one of the many canals connecting different areas of Amsterdam.



Mt. Kilimanjaro above the cloud tops which we flew by on our way to Ngorongoro Crater.



After Amsterdam, our next stop was Nairobi, Kenya, for one night at the luxurious Norfolk Hotel. The next day we arrived at Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania, on a King Air charter flight arranged by Robin Hurt Safaris. The area is a UNESCO World Heritage Site adjoining the Serengeti National Park occupying 3,200 square miles. Within it lies the Ngorongoro Crater, a large volcanic caldera covering 100 square miles. It is unique in Tanzania in that wildlife is protected while allowing human habitation. We spent two nights in these huts at the Ngorongoro Crater Lodge. They were located about one hundred yards from the main lodge where we had our meals.

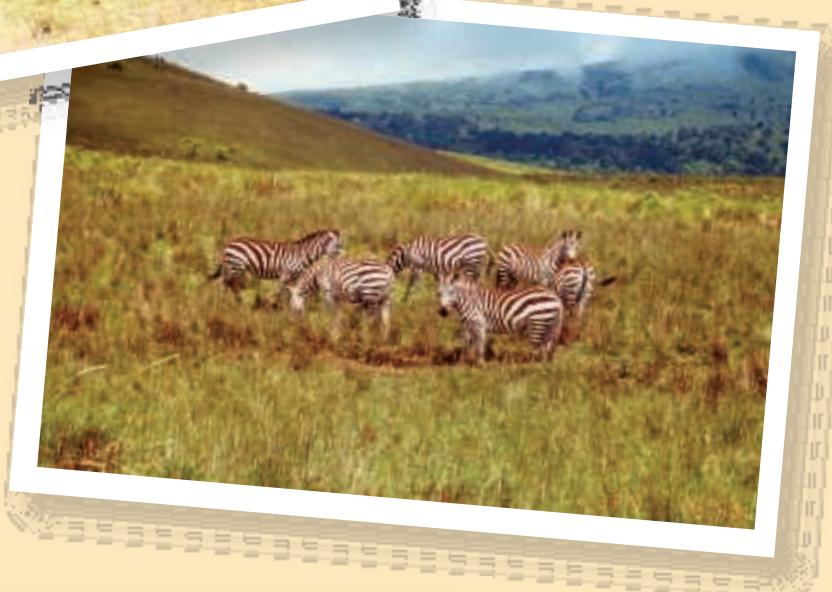
One evening, Carl, Andrea and I went over to the Lodge to have cocktails before dinner. Paula wasn't quite ready and said she would come later. We asked the lodge desk clerk to send someone to accompany her since it was already getting dark. They did, a young boy about thirteen or fourteen years old armed with a stick. Paula came out and the two headed for the lodge. Suddenly they heard something behind them. The young boy turned and pointed his flashlight directly at a Cape buffalo, one of the deadliest animals in Africa. Paula was not happy when she joined us and told us about the encounter with the Cape buffalo which kept following them almost all the way to the lodge.



This beautifully maned lion I dubbed King of the Rock.



These are wildebeests
which never leave the crater.
Normally they are migratory
animals but everything
needed for their food
supply grows year round
in the crater.

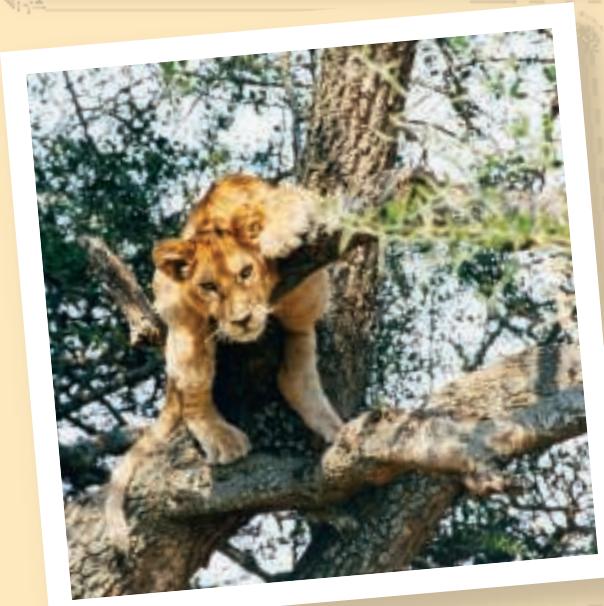
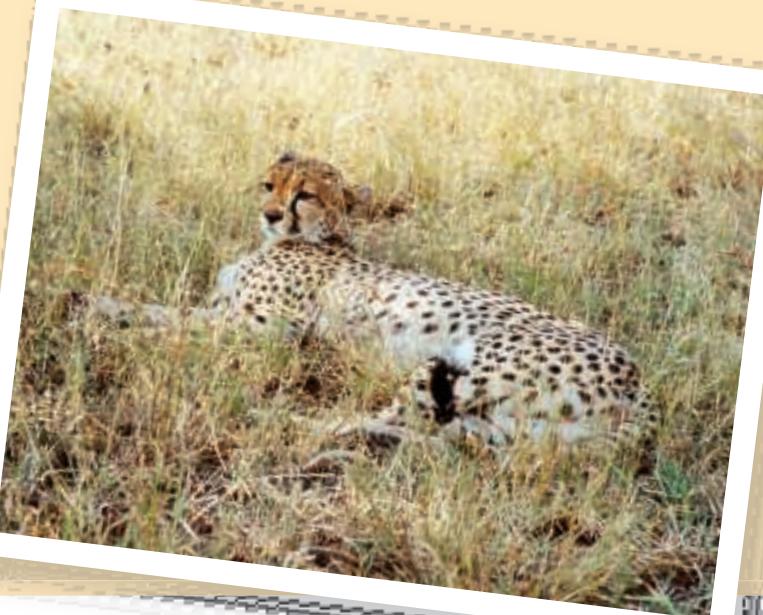


The zebras were abundant
in the crater and allowed us to get up
very close to them.



One afternoon we left the
Ngorongoro Crater for an
hour's drive to a Masai
village. The villagers gladly
posed for this picture.
This tribe lived in dung huts.
One of the elders bragged
that he had three wives, each
with her own hut.

After leaving Ngorongoro Crater we spent the entire day driving to Sopa Lodge in the Serengeti. We spent three nights at Sopa. There we would get up early and spend the entire day roaming the Serengeti with our private guide in an open-top vehicle. This is a leopard we spotted one morning. Leopards are very difficult to find during the day. Paula spotted this one and we were able to get close enough for this good photo.



This is a herd of elephants we watched for thirty or forty minutes out on the Serengeti.

This is a young male lion up in a tree. It was a surprise to see him up there. Previously, I had been told that lions do not climb. Our driver drove up to what I thought was dangerously close, only twenty to twenty-five feet away. We were standing up looking out the top of the vehicle and were cautioned by our guide to "don't move a muscle." After ten or fifteen minutes we slowly drove away.



It is almost as if these three giraffes were posing for us, standing out in the road as we drove through South Africa's Kruger National Park. This is one of the best animal pictures I've ever taken.

After visiting Kruger we caught a flight to Pretoria, one of South Africa's three capital cities. The other two are Cape Town and Bloemfontein. The next day,

Monday, May 29, we boarded the famous Blue Train for an overnight trip to Cape Town. Carl and Andrea enjoy the club car on the Blue Train.



Paula and me at the Cape of Good Hope. After three days in Cape Town we left via South African Airways for a flight back to Ft. Lauderdale, arriving home on June 3. It was a wonderful vacation shared with Paula, Carl and Andrea.



Paula and I greet then presidential candidate George W. Bush on his arrival in Tampa for a campaign swing through Florida in 2000.



September 13, 2000

Mr. Doc Dockery
Post Office Box 2805
Lakeland, FL 33806

Dear Doc,

Laura and I are grateful for your leadership on my campaign in Florida. Your support means a lot. With the help of friends like you, we will spread our inclusive message of hope and opportunity from Pensacola to Miami.

The remaining months of the campaign will be tough, but I welcome the contest. I take nothing for granted. This will be a close race, but with you on the team, I am confident that we will win not only Florida, but the White House, as well.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

POST OFFICE BOX 1902, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78767 PHONE 512/637-2000 FAX 512/344-4798 WWW.GEORGEWBUSH.COM
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*The Committee for
The Presidential Inaugural
requests the honor of your presence
to attend and participate in the Inauguration of
George Walker Bush
as President of the United States of America
and
Richard Bruce Cheney
as Vice President of the United States of America
on Saturday, the twentieth of January
two thousand and one
in the City of Washington*



YOU HAVE GRANTED ME LIFE AND LOVING KINDNESS; AND YOUR CARE HAS PRESERVED MY SPIRIT.
JOB 10:12 (NASB)

May you celebrate the joys of
faith, family, and friendship
this holiday season and always.
2003

For Bill Laura Bush

This is a Christmas card sent to Paula and me from President George Bush and Laura.



Meeting President Obama in 2011 was a distinct pleasure for me. And, I was extremely flattered when I introduced myself as Doc Dockery and he responded, "Yes, your name and your work on high speed rail are familiar to me. Buddy Dyer (Mayor of Orlando) and I were discussing you and high speed rail earlier today." President Obama's vision to build a high speed rail network throughout the U.S., similar to what President Eisenhower did with the Interstate Highway System, has made me a real fan of his. It's a shame that Governor Rick Scott refused to accept more than \$2 billion from Obama's administration to build the first leg of the system, Tampa/Orlando, in Florida.



Paula and me with President Bush and his brother Governor Jeb Bush.



U.S. House Speaker Denny Hastert was a frequent visitor to Florida. Here we're on a boat owned by our good friend Michael Holley for a dinner cruise out in the Gulf of Mexico off St. Pete Beach.



Paula and me with our good friend Senator Bill Nelson at a reception in Lakeland



Paula and me with 2008 presidential candidate Senator Fred Thompson from Tennessee.

Before he became a senator, and late in his senate career, Thompson had many acting roles in movies and on TV. The ones I like best are his roles in The Hunt for Red October and his appearances on the TV show Law and Order.



Florida Governor Charlie Crist, Paula and me. Charlie was elected to succeed Jeb Bush. He served one term before resigning to run for the U.S. Senate but failed to win the Republican nomination. He was beaten by former House Speaker Marco Rubio who was subsequently elected to the Senate. When Charlie did not receive the Republican nomination he ran as an Independent in a three-way race which included Marco Rubio and Democrat Kendrick Meek.



Polk Community College

Office of the President

999 Avenue H, Northeast • Winter Haven, Florida 33881-4299

Phone: 863.297.1098 • Suncon: 580.1098

Fax: 863.297.1053

December 16, 2004

Mr. C.C. Dockery
Dockery Management
PO Box 2805
Lakeland, FL 33806

Dear Doc:

Congratulations on being selected by *Florida Trend* as one of the most influential leaders in Florida. While there could be much debate about the subjective process and valid questions raised about the inclusion of a few of the individuals and the omission of some who might be more deserving, *Florida Trend* hit the mark in most cases. In my humble opinion they were certainly justified in including you in the select list.

I commend you for your enlightened service to your community and state as well as for your obvious success in your chosen career field. My wish is that you will continue to use your influence to make this a better place to live and work. If I can ever assist in any way, do not hesitate to call on me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that appears to read "Larry".

J. Larry Durrence
President

JLD/be

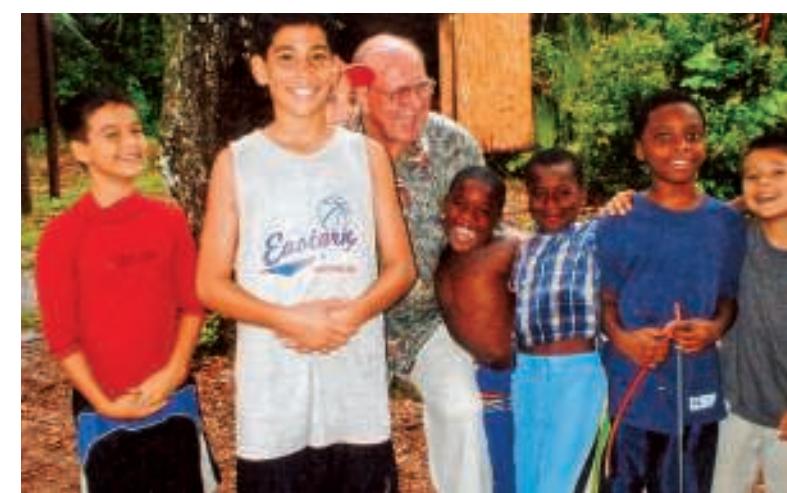
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For more than a decade I have sponsored 336 children to attend Camp Wewa, a YMCA run camp north of Orlando. The children are members of Girls Inc and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Lakeland and Mulberry. A few of the very first campers are now working as counselors at the summer camp.



Mr. and Mrs. Dockery,

We all would like to thank you for allowing us to be able to attend Camp WEWA. The experience was both exciting and educational. We were glad to be a part of the Camp WEWA family, and we thank you for allowing us to do so. At Camp WEWA, we learned many skills - Such as, diving, archery, basketball, pioneering, and most of all... SOCIAL SKILLS!! Learning to get along and make friends were two very important things we learned how to do at camp. Once again we thank you greatly! Love, Girls Inc



That's me with some of the kids from Boys and Girls Clubs attending Camp Wewa.



"Unknown Angel"

Words can never express our deepest gratitude & thank you for your generous donation to our mtg. co. I still can't believe that we have somehow touched your heart in a way that you would take your hard earned money & help us beyond our

Occasionally I make anonymous donations to individuals whom I've read about. This donation was for several thousand dollars to help a Polk County couple save their home. To remain anonymous, I changed their first names to initials and deleted their last name.

wildest dreams.

I believe in prayers & God's blessings, & in our eyes you are a blessing from God & for that we are internally grateful.

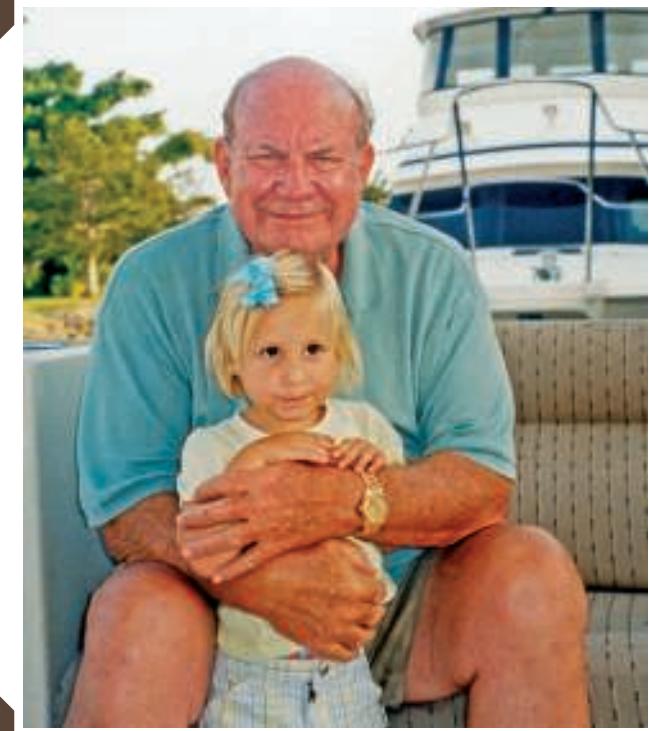
Thank you & may God bless you!

J+E



*Granddaughter Katharine on the back of her dog Halley,
a female from the same litter of pups as Comet.*

Katharine and Papa on a yacht near Lake Okeechobee. Paula and I boarded the yacht in Ft. Lauderdale and came up the inland waterway to canal C-44, near Stuart, to Lake Okeechobee. Paula had to leave us to get back to Tallahassee after we crossed the lake. Then Carl, Andrea and Katharine boarded the yacht and we traveled down the Caloosahatchee River to Fort Myers. They got off there and drove back to Lakeland. I continued down Florida's west coast to Everglades City where Michele and Fred joined me for a couple of days of fishing. The boat broke down there so I got off and traveled back to Lakeland with them. I had planned to cruise down to the keys.



Katharine and Papa having fun at her home on Jefferson Drive. She's a delightful young lady who always makes me laugh.

Having fun with Katharine feeding the ducks on Lake Hollingsworth. The bandage on my nose covers the spot where I had a skin cancer removed.



*This is our home near
Blowing Rock, on top of a
4,000 ft mountain.*

*We can sit on the front porch,
looking south, and see the
famous tourist attraction
Grandfather Mountain, about
fifteen miles away.*



*Bass Lake surrounded by
beautiful fall foliage.*



*While in North Carolina I try to get in
a daily walk around Bass Lake,
near Blowing Rock. The walk around
the lake is nine tenths of a mile.
Many more hiking trails intersect with
the lake. They are located on the Cone
Estate which was donated to the National
Parks system by the estate of Moses H.
Cone. When I was in better health
I enjoyed the longer hikes, up to three and
a half miles through the mountains.*





Michele has just hooked a nice sized trout in a lake a few miles from our home in Blowing Rock. That's Justin on the right and me sitting on the wall.



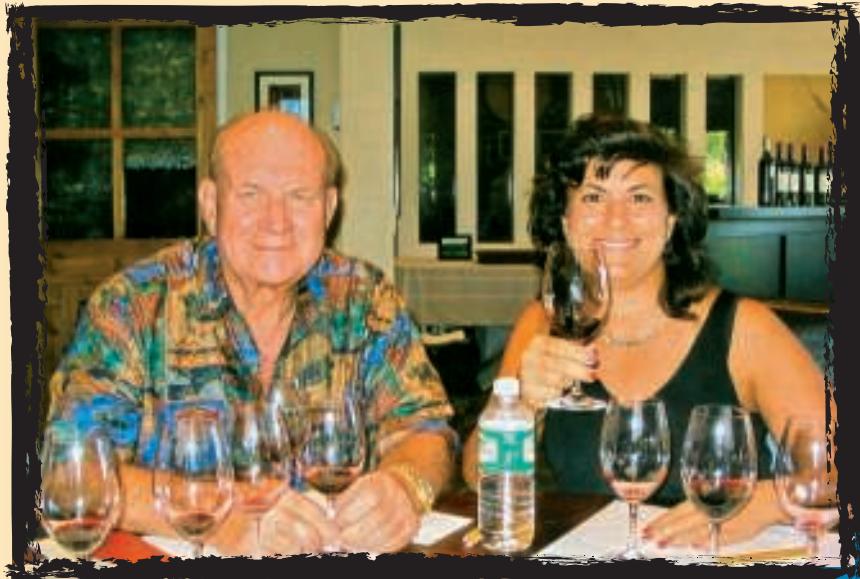
Justin and Michele at Linville Falls south of Blowing Rock. I first visited Linville Falls in the forties with Mom, Grandma and Auntie.



Paula with one of the snowmobiles we rented to ride through the mountains east of Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Standing with her are three of the lodge employees. We didn't choose to take a guide, instead going off on our own, as usual. The trails were well marked but as we were headed back to the lodge it started snowing very hard and I was afraid that I would miss the markers and lead Paula out into the wilderness. Fortunately, with some luck, we got back safely.

The Dockery Cemetery is located about a mile south of Union Cross Church where my grandfather and grandmother Dockery are buried with a lot of other Dockerys. The cemetery is across the road from Grandfather Dockery's farm. At one time the land surrounding the cemetery was all owned by him.

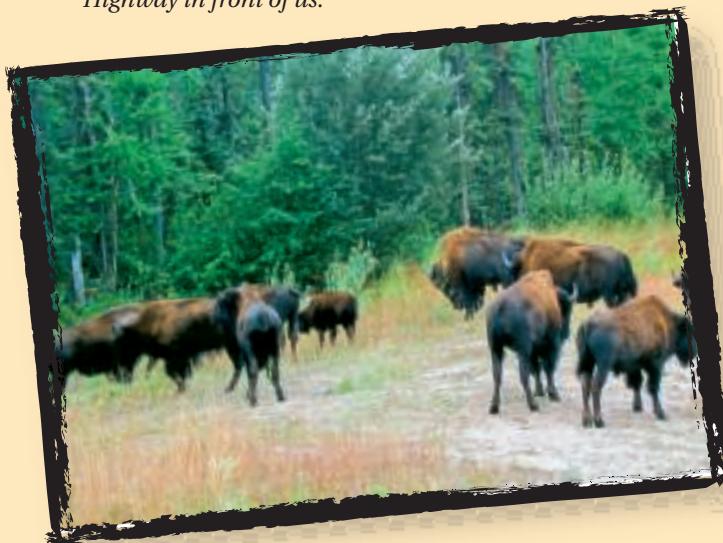




Each year Paula and I go to Sausalito, California for week's vacation. A visit to Napa or Sonoma is always included for a day of wine tasting.



This herd of buffalo seemed not to care about our intrusion as they crossed the Alaska Highway in front of us.

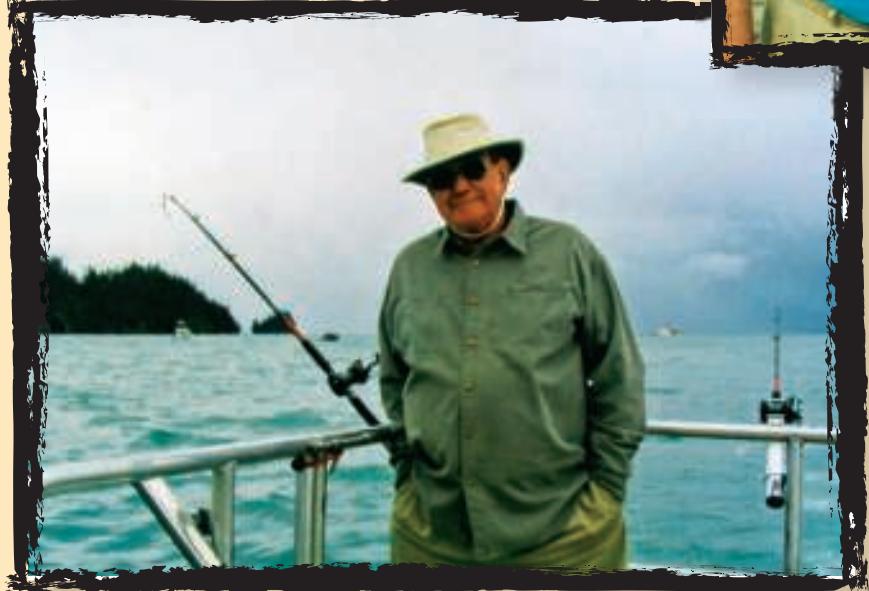


After one of our trips to Sausalito, we decided to drive up the California, Oregon, and Washington coastline with a stop in Seattle to visit Paula's Aunt Louise and Uncle Dick McChesney. We continued the drive north through Canada up the great Alaska Highway constructed from 1942 to 1944 extending for 1,523 miles from Dawson Creek, British Columbia to Fairbanks, Alaska. Some of the road is paved but most of it is gravel. We left the Alaska Highway at Tok then drove down to Glennallen, visited Chugach State Park then on to Valdez where we spent a couple of nights before taking a ferry over to Whittier.



This pipeline runs from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, a distance of eight hundred miles. Two thousand one hundred and thirty-six million barrels of oil per day can be pumped through the pipeline. The first barrel of oil traveled through the pipeline in 1977. The pipeline runs underground but much of it is above ground. To the left side of this photograph you can see where the pipeline comes out of the ground and runs for many miles above ground.

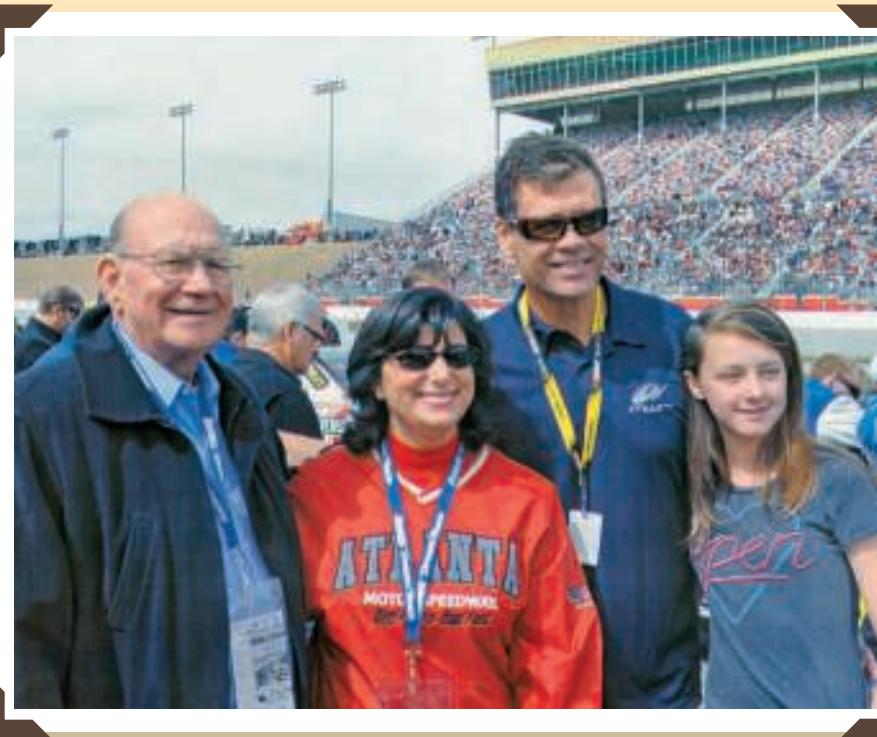
Here we are at the end of the Alaska Highway at mile marker 1422. At mile marker 1422 the highway continues to Fairbanks as Highway 2.



Each time we go to Alaska we always make time for a day of fishing for silver salmon in an area about an hour from the boat dock at Seward, out toward the Pacific Ocean.

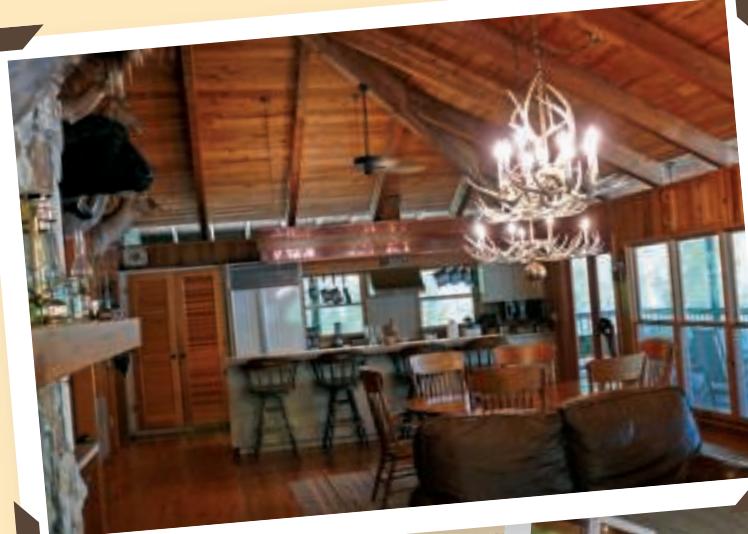


Enjoying the good life with Paula's parents, Lu, sitting on my lap, and Guy, sitting next to Paula, one of the many dining experiences we've enjoyed together throughout the years.



Paula and me with race car driver Michael Waltrip and his daughter. We were in Atlanta for a NASCAR race. Thanks to our friend Dale Jacobs we had VIP passes which allowed us to go almost everywhere. Waldrop is as much fun in person as he is when he's acting up in TV commercials.

After selling Summit I bought land and built a house on Pretty Lake, seven miles south of Groveland. Over the years I added to that purchase bringing the total number of acres up to about 340 today. The house was built on stilts and overlooks the north end of the lake which runs about a mile and a half from the north end to the south. It has a tin roof. I like to sit on the back porch and listen to the rain splatter on the tin. On the left-hand side of the picture a rock chimney is visible behind the branches of one of the smaller trees. Under the back side of the house there is a swing and two wooden tables for entertaining. We've had as many as 175 guests show up for events – usually political fund raisers.



This is a shot of the living/dining/kitchen area. The chandeliers are custom made from deer antlers.

My favorite sitting area at Pretty Lake is on the porch which wraps around three sides of the house. The wooden tables on the far end are two of three which we fill up for Thanksgiving dinners.



This is a walkway from the back porch down to a sitting area large enough for about eighteen or twenty guests to enjoy refreshments while overlooking a portion of the lake. To the extreme right you can see a portion of a fishing dock extending out into the lake where you can catch a "mess" of brim and bluegill in fifteen or twenty minutes.



This is a view of Pretty Lake looking south. The lake is about a mile and a half in length and is shaped much like a snowman.



Soon after I bought the property at Pretty Lake I asked the Florida Game and Fish Commission to come in and do a fish survey. They do this by putting electrodes on two lines and tossing them out into the water. An electrical current is switched on to run to the electrodes. This causes the fish to swim to the top of the water trying to get away from the electrical current. They are then dipped out of the water with a net and weighed and measured. The game and fish officer shown

in this photo is holding what he thought might be a U.S. record sized bluegill. It was netted in Gator Lake which is connected to Pretty Lake by a small canal. He tossed the fish back in the lake and suggested I come out and try to catch it and enter it to be considered for the U.S. record. I tried but never saw the very large bluegill again.

Thanksgiving at the farm on Pretty Lake has become an "almost annual" affair. Here, Paula enjoys cooking for the family and friends on Thanksgiving. She has become a very good cook.

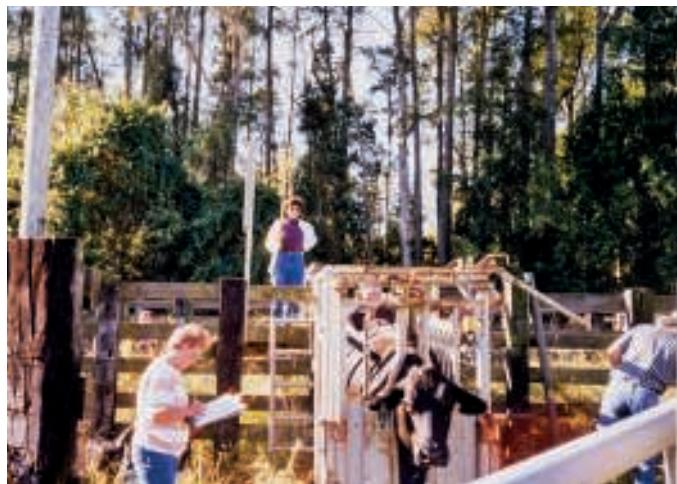


On the porch of the Pretty Lake farmhouse. From the left, Andrea, Katharine, Carl, me, Alan Dockery, Helga and Ludwig Spiessl, Andrea's parents, enjoying a delicious Thanksgiving meal.

Helga gives me a big hug as Fred cranks up the tractor to take our guests out to the groves to pick navel, grapefruit and tangerines.

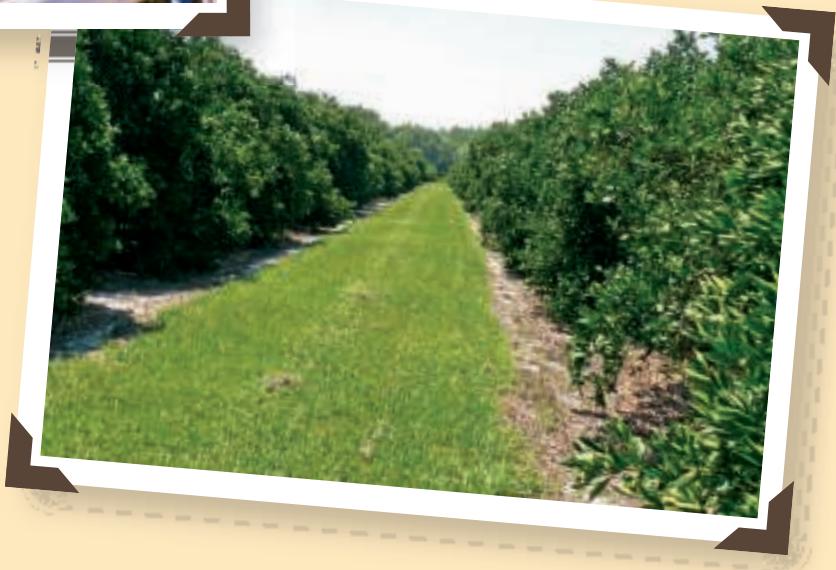


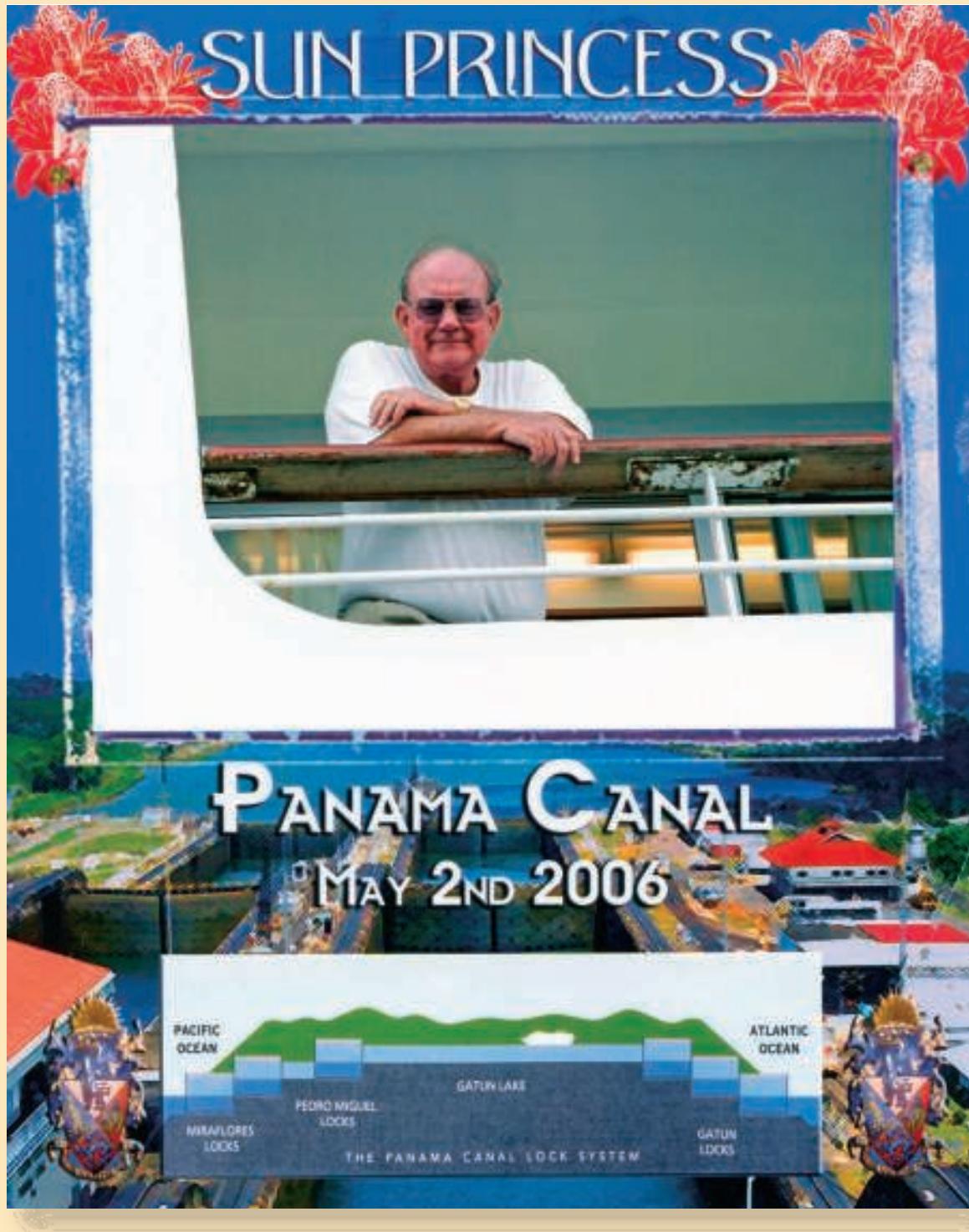
For many years I ran more than a hundred head of cattle on my Pretty Lake farm. Now, much of the pastures have been turned into additional acreage of navel oranges and wildlife habitat for turkey and quail.



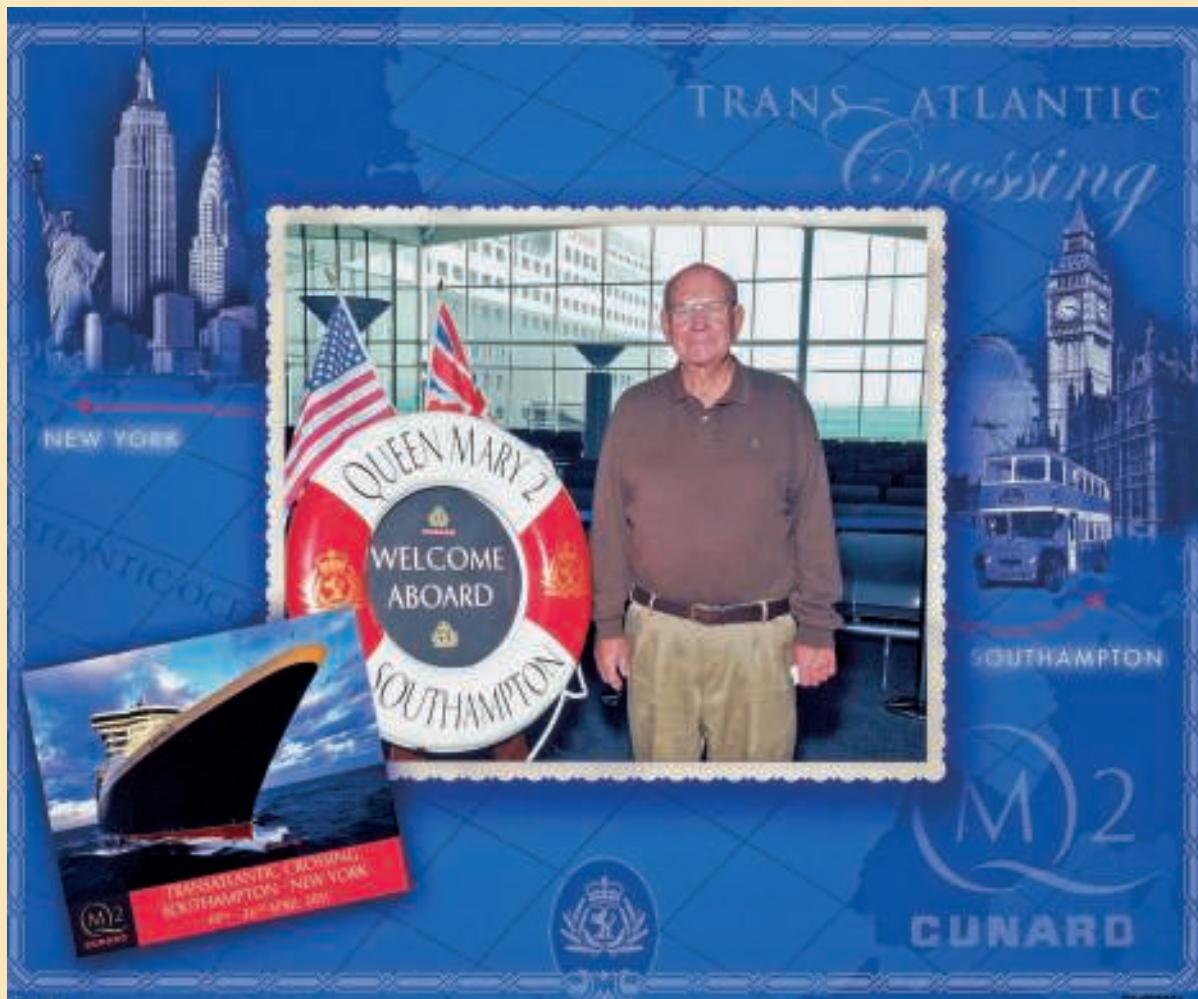
This is Grove number Two at Pretty Lake Farm, located about seven miles south of Groveland on State Road 33. Grove One was planted in 1986 and is located just beyond the trees shown in the background of Grove Two. In 2008 I added Grove Three. It is adjacent to Grove One. All totaled, I have about twenty-five acres of navel oranges.

Each year, with the help of Paul and Reba Mazak, we would round up the cows for brucellosis vaccinations and worming. Paula is helping with this round-up. She has a "shocker" stick to punch the cows in the butt to make them move forward into the chute where they would be vaccinated and wormed. Watching her and listening to her was a lot of fun. She would beg the cows to move on so that she wouldn't have to shock them. They didn't pay much attention to her. The "shocker" worked much better!





On my "bucket list" was a trip through the Panama Canal. I got to cross that off on May 2, 2006, navigating the marvelous engineering achievement aboard the Sun Princess cruise ship.



Ever since my thirteen-day transatlantic crossing from the U.S. to Bremerhaven, Germany in 1952, as described in the chapter on the fifties, I've wanted to do a luxury transatlantic crossing to see what that would be like. In April of 2011 I did it aboard the Queen Mary 2 from Southampton, England to Brooklyn, New York.

That was the next to the last item on my bucket list which has now been crossed off. The publication of this autobiography is the last item on the list.

It was a wonderful cruise. I was upgraded to first class, the Queen's Deck, from second class, the Princess Deck.

There were ten restaurants on board the ship to serve 2,800 passengers. I tried eight of them during the seven-night, six-day crossing. Although we had a few days of rough seas, twelve-foot waves, the recently commissioned Queen Mary 2 with extended horizontal stabilizers took all of the roll out of the movement of the ship. The pitch

forward and aft was not all that significant.

On the Queen's Deck we had our own private concierge and bar, the Commodore. I was near the bow of the ship where the Commodore Club was. The restaurants were aft. From the Commodore Club to the restaurants in the aft section was little bit more than 1,000 feet. I traveled back and forth several times a day getting in a good bit of exercise. The last evening I dined at the Todd English restaurant for an extra fee of \$30. Meals in all the other restaurants were included in the ticket price. Dining in the Todd English was well worth it. The franchise name is associated with luxury restaurants in New York, London and around the world.

Other bucket list items which I've crossed off during the past few years included a drive from Vancouver, B.C to Alaska on the Alaska Highway and the east to west crossing through the Panama Canal.