

Visit to my Mom on my Birthday May 2008

My sister and my nieces have been taking turns visiting my 95 year old mother in Florida for some time. I have also been going there recently, although it is a much longer trip from the West Coast. The occasion was a decade birthday of mine (never mind which decade), plus Mom had not yet my new wife, Kathy.

We flew from Burbank CA, to Dallas-Fort Worth where we had to change planes. Having been there before, we discovered how to get outside away from the turmoil in the terminal. It was very pleasant sitting on a bench in the fresh air, and eating our lunch. I suggested we have a little wine with our meal, so I went to this little wine bar in the terminal. The thieves charged \$10 a bottle for $\frac{1}{4}$ bottle of wine! While in Florida, we stopped at a little "stop and go" place and paid \$1.88 for a similar size bottle!

We asked a lady who was waiting for someone to take our picture outside the terminal toasting the trip. Kathy is sitting down, by the way. She is NOT that short!



The flight to West Palm Airport was uneventful, and we checked into our hotel for the night. The next morning, we went to my Mom's place and chatted for a while. My sister had asked me to hook up her VCR for her, as the cable guy unplugged it because there was only an outlet for the TV and cable box. After digging around in the closet, I finally found an extension cord that worked and plugged everything in.

I then tried to turn the cable box on, and every time I did, it turned itself off! It was driving me nuts, until I heard Mom and Kathy laughing. Mom was sitting behind me with the remote, and every time I turned the box on, she would turn it off.

We had a very nice lunch, and then Mom suggested we visit Morokami Gardens, in the next town. A Japanese family settled there in the early 1900's and the family eventually donated the gardens to the State. The gardens were very beautiful, but being Florida, it was very hot and humid!



We went to a restaurant called the Banana Boat for dinner, but it was quite noisy. I noticed a boat rental place across the small channel, and took down their number. We had planned to rent a boat through a place we found on the Internet, but this place was more convenient.

We went back to Mom's place and she had a birthday cake made for me. It said "Happy Birthday Steve" on it, and I asked her how come, because she always called me Stephen. She told me that if she wanted to have "Stephen" on it she would have had to get the next size cake! Always thinking!



The next morning we had breakfast at the hotel and headed to the boat rental place. Some years ago, Kathy was a water skier and jet boat driver, so I knew she would love to cruise the intercoastal waterway. We had images of renting some small aluminum boat with a little outboard motor on it.

Well, when we got there, they offered a 19 foot bowrider with a covered top. The boat could really haul! Since Kathy had a lot more experience with power boats, she did most of the driving. When we were opposite my Mom's condo, I called her on my cell phone and asked her to come out on the breezeway. She walked to the end and yelled at us, "You kids having fun?", and we were.

Another boater, seeing us stopped, came by and asked if we were having a problem, and we told him, "Thanks, but we were waving at my Mom".



After we brought the boat back, we had lunch at a restaurant over the water called the "Two Georges", and went back to the hotel for an "old people's nap". When I called my Mom, she asked if we were up in Saint Augustine because she had not heard from us. I apologized profusely for not calling her when we got back.

We took Mom out to a nice restaurant for dinner, and then went back to her place. She brought out some pictures of Mom and Dad and me at the age of 3 in the sailboat Dad built. Kathy thought I looked cute, but I told her I was not going to buy a sailor hat!



I found the pictures wonderful, to see my parents in their late 20's, and me as a 3 year old, but I have no memories of sailing with them, as it was so long ago.

We kissed Mom goodnight, and returned to our hotel. Our flight home was uneventful other than a hot landing at Burbank Airport.

I called my sister to get a report, and she said that Mom liked Kathy better than me! Thanks a lot!

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