

March 2006

As I write this letter I am very much missing my sweetheart and dearest friend of more than 57 years. Early last fall, Carl was diagnosed with cancer. Although he was determined to get better, Carl lost his courageous struggle and, on January 9th, he moved on to his eternal home. He would have been 80 on March 8th.

During the months of brutal chemotherapy that left him unbelievably sick and weak, he was still setting goals and making plans. Carl took it upon himself to be in charge of our Thanksgiving gathering. He created the menu, drafted the layout for the serving tables and seating arrangement for 28 of us, and gave detailed instructions for disposing properly of the garbage and trash! Though he was unable to eat even one morsel, he thoroughly enjoyed being surrounded by his loved ones.

Christmas Day found Carl in the hospital for emergency surgery, and we spent the next two weeks with him in the ICU. His mind was clear but, due to the ventilator that helped him breathe, he was unable to speak. We knew he had much he wanted to say to us, but communication was frustrating and difficult. At times we were encouraged, yet his recovery was not to be.

Life for me is different now, and the grieving takes time. It comes and it goes, and comes again when I least expect it. But I know I shall be forever grateful for all the years of sharing my life with such a remarkable and fine human being. I appreciated so much the message of a dear friend who wrote, "We share your grief but also joy for a life well lived."

I think I am doing well. I am learning that even the loss of a loved one comes with many blessings:

. . . the reminders from others of how well Carl lived his life: hard-working, selfless, kind and caring, a man of integrity, always striving to bring out the best in each of us;

. . . the meaningful gifts of cards, notes, phone calls and visits, the lovely floral arrangements, and the charitable contributions honoring Carl's memory;

. . . the travelers who came long distances to join us as we celebrated Carl's life and those who came to pay their respects to him and consoled us with their gentle handshakes, warm hugs, and sympathetic hearts;

. . . our children, their compassionate spouses, and our dear grandchildren who could not have been more loving and helpful.

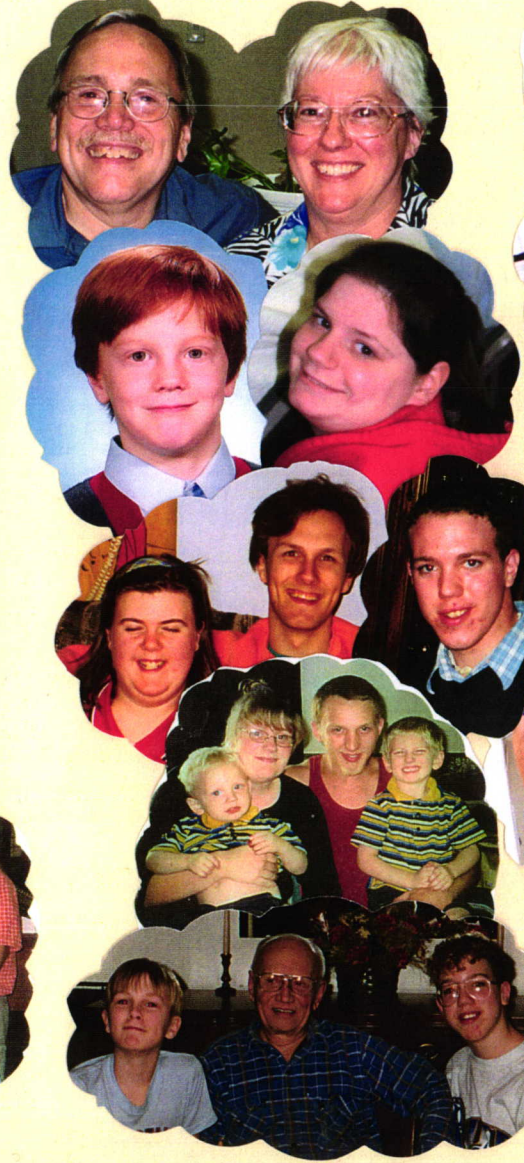
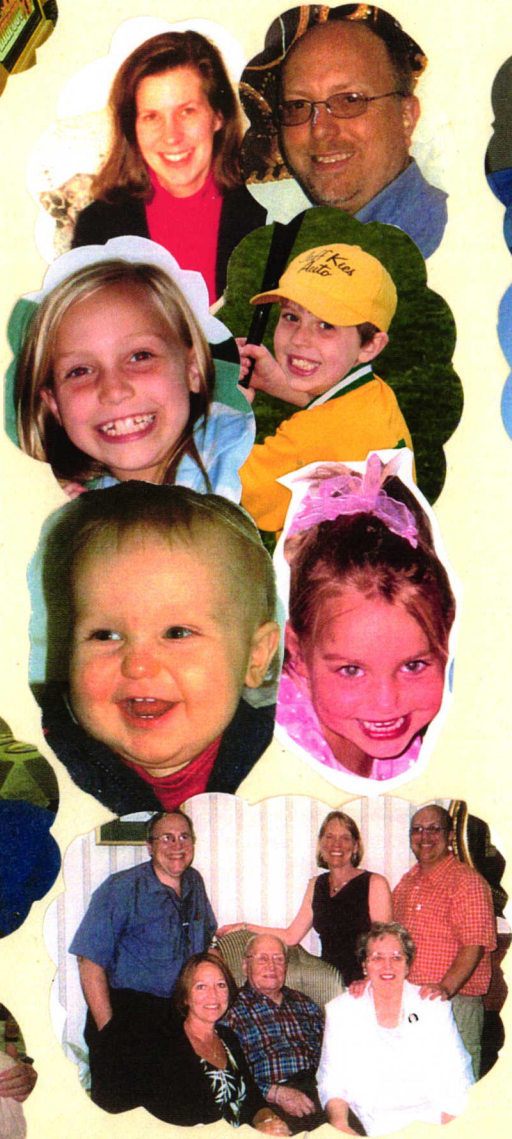
The thoughts, prayers, and kindnesses of friends and family continue to surround and comfort me. Because of that, I know that God is here. I feel His love and His peace, and I'll be okay.

Your keeping in touch has meant so much to Carl and me, especially since I have been remiss in writing to you. May God bless you for that! Continue to make beautiful memories with those you love because "when someone you love becomes a memory, that memory becomes a treasure."

Thinking of you with love and prayers,

The Wenzingers

Our family is like a patchwork quilt with kindness gently sewn;
Each piece is an original with beauty all its own.
With threads of warmth and happiness it's tightly stitched together
To last in love throughout the years - our family's forever treasure.



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