

REMEMBRANCES
OF
ALAN W. HAVIGHURST

By Dr. Julie Morse Havighurst

Remembering Alan W. Havighurst

Our Alan of the brilliant mind has left us. Many called him Al, some Gurst, several Alvin. His mother called him Alan. And a few here and there occasionally called him Counselor. I often addressed him, at least privately, as "Shorty".....because he wasn't.

For much of the last thirty years he was my personal Google, beginning several decades before others had one too. In some decades he was also my clipping service, bringing to me articles he knew I either had special interest in....or should. My friend seemed to actually memorize his Wall Street Journal and PD daily. I will sorely miss him. The hole his death has left in my heart will be everlasting.

Our brilliant Alan could and would make me laugh like no other. He was one of the few individuals on this earth I always, ALWAYS, enjoyed talking with. "Syllable dillable, Alan W. Havighurst, knew all the words penned there in Webster's book." That was the first line of a ditty I wrote about him over a quarter century ago. And good heavens could he spell; they do say opposites attract. If I had a dollar for every spelling error he ever found--here, there, and everywhere--I imagine I might privately fund the year's budget for Obamacare.

Then there are the thousands of funnies we shared. Often those were things that Alan said where neither of us any longer remembered the specifics, however we both still remembered HIS punch lines! One such punch line, surely now funny to no one but me, is simply this: "Bagdad on the Cuyahoga." An all time favorite concerns practically the sole error of intellect he was ever guilty of. Alan had a momentary lapse. He referred to Richard Henry Dana's famous book as "Twenty Years Before the Mast." I argued against that title, found the book on the shelf, then presented him with "Two Years Before the Mast." Without missing a beat, he exclaimed, "Oh, that's the condensed version!"

Then there was the time Alan answered the phone at his law office, "Tambo Tambo speaking," thinking it was me calling. He had meant to tease about a news story we had been discussing earlier in the day. However, it wasn't me calling him back. The lady on the line was the cruise director for the Nautica Queen. The surprised woman was calling, at my request, confirming our reservations....and expecting to be given a credit card number.....for what was, or for what should have been nearly the last cruise of their season.

As I remember, she accepted his credit card anyway! The two of us did take that late season Lake Erie cruise. On the dock that afternoon I snapped what would always be my favorite photo of Alan; the one with the Cuyahoga River and its bridges in the background. That evening huge waves did force the ship back behind the breakwall. However, not before the band's heavy equipment broke loose nearly smashing us both. After dark the two of us went up top, leaving everyone else to the noise below. Now, in the relative stillness of the river, entirely alone on the quiet, huge, open-air, top deck, I said, "WOW, this must be what it feels like to be Christina Onassis". "Or," said Alan,

"like Francine LeFrak". Neither of us ever forgot that rough and wendy cruse, nor the gem of a way downtown Cleveland's lights shimmered that crisp night.

Over the years Alan and I have spoken, from time to time, of a special evening we spent at the Top of the Town. That occasion was only a night or two before that venerable downtown restaurant closed its doors forever. The wild, wintry weather, dramatized by white clouds pillow-fighting as they flew by, had, as a wide backdrop, snow and sleet giving on and off shrouding of other skyscrapers. That rapidly changing view was a perfect one by which to sip Grand Marnier and hot tea. A bittersweet evening I see well enough today in my mind's eye to revisit. I plan to go to that evening in my dreams when I want to see Alan again, and desire a special venue in which to remember the good years. And there have been many wonderful years of friendship, years mixed together with a few that weren't so wonderful. Isn't that life?

I am still able to visualize the look I saw on Alan's face the afternoon his uncle, Professor Walter Havighurst, drove off, starting his personalized tour of the campus of Miami University a little TOO quickly. The heralded writer of heartland history, most famously, "Long Ships Passing," had not noticed that Alan was still standing in the driveway of his home, Shadowy Hills, rather than seated in the backseat, as the elderly professor apparently assumed. Looking befuddled, Alan made not one move to chase after us. Perhaps he just didn't want to embarrass the elderly gentleman. Shortly, however, I was able to "encourage" Uncle Walter to NOTICE that his nephew was missing from the car. Soon thereafter, Uncle turned around and drove home to pick up Alan; Alan who had not moved one inch since his treasured uncle, the uncle who had once included him on a magical Great Lakes freighter trip to Lake Superior, had driven off leaving him behind. Incidentally, the "W" in Alan's name stands for Walter.

Last year another uncle, Robert Havighurst, was the subject of a Jeopardy answer. Excitedly, I tracked down Alan the next day; a feat not too difficult until a bit less than two months ago. I couldn't wait to tell him. That story brought back memories for both of us about the time Alan tried out for that TV program. While Jeopardy didn't invite him on, he had done quite well. He also memorized all the questions he had been asked. Even though, out of those he wrote down, I didn't get nearly as many right as he did, I did correctly answer all of the ones he missed. One of those had had "What is Canis lupus?" as the correct answer.

Of course I remember well the day we were married. That day, unhappily, and without telling me, my father took Alan and some others out for AAAAAAAaaa beer. And, as we all know Alan NEVER had just one. Thanks Dad! Fortunate it was that we had had several cameramen doing videos of the wedding. Fortunate it was that Steve Smith was there to help Alan get prepared to exit the reception. And dearest Doug put our luggage in the car for us that night....once he finally found it. Eldest brother Bruce and family couldn't make it that weekend. That was a fact that saddened Alan because he loved Bruce immensely; even forgiving Bruce, and Bruce's friends, for the nickname they assigned him during his chubby-cheeked stage. Bonzo. I must admit, I took a certain delight in reminding Alan of that from time to time.

Twelve or so years ago Alan seriously needed a new car. At that time he had had my father accompany him car shopping. It was unsafe to let Alan in a dealership all by himself, and he knew it. The wolves could sense his arrival. Salesmen would crouch for the kill, lick their chops, and start drooling over their anticipated fat commission. Alan, along with his all too widely opened wallet, stuck out like a sore thumb. Once, some decades earlier, a salesman had clipped my brilliant friend, charging him, in cash, several thousand too much for a fairly basic, pretty, showroom red, Ford Taurus. But Alan and my father returned from their shopping that day with a reasonable car for a reasonable price. That huge old four-door served him well enough. Sadly, however, it turned out to be Alan's last car. It should now be buried too. Although I must say, I will miss, with all my heart, seeing that big old silver car chugging around the Heights.

Martha Lee and I would, I suggest, prefer to believe Alan had loved us best. That would, however, not be the deepest truth. Simply, Alan Havighurst loved two others more. That love was far, far, deeper, and longer, than that which he ever had for any single individual; save for his mother, and, of course, his dad and brothers Bruce and Doug. The love I am speaking of would be the love he had for first, University School, and second, Amherst College; then, more-or-less collectively, for everyone and everything connected with either institution. And as long as we are discussing true love, this is the paragraph in which to mention Alan's lifelong love for his Cleveland Browns and his Cleveland Indians. His love of those two teams is indelibly etched in stone, with a foundation as deep as the earliest memories of childhood!

It would be my suspicion the only occupation he ever cared about was NOT the practice of law, not even the tax and estate law he was known for, but teaching at US. Every time throughout the decades that we encountered a former student, or another US teacher, his face would light up. A fully luminescent smile would spread from ear to ear. When he talked about his US friends he sounded just plain happy!

Al loved it when George Crile, a US friend from way back, would breeze through town. George would call and the two would lunch together; Al joyously providing accurate and detailed updates on all interesting aspects of the lives, and careers, of numerous mutual friends and acquaintances. The frosting on the cake would certainly have been all things local, newsworthy items that might make a world traveler rest for a moment. When George died several years ago of pancreatic cancer Al was crushed. He procured, and made available copies of the video of the memorial service to many others. When I spoke with my beloved old friend as he lay dying, he said to me, "I have the same thing as George Crile, pancreatic cancer." Surely that sameness would have had an impact on Alan. Following the death of his friend, Alan often mentioned that that was the one cancer that offered nothing, save a death sentence. "You sure don't want THAT," he would cringe. Ironically he died of THE cancer he feared most.

In 2002 Alan took me to his Amherst College class reunion. There I saw exuberance and joy, hearing in his voice both pleasure and happiness. His happiness was obviously brought on by being surrounded by his college friends, hail-fellows-well-met

such as Dr. Mike Boxer and Dr. Paul Bunn; Bunnie, Al would call the latter. Dear friend Mike Boxer was connected with Al right to the end; calling the hospital a number of times. Consulting with both Martha Lee and Doug Havighurst as recently as the afternoon before he died.

Over a decade ago when a few of his friends and frat mates from Amherst came to Cleveland for several special Indians games, Al was ecstatic. However, one of his well-healed, out-of-town buddies was not so lucky that trip. One of his highly educated friends got arrested for scalping while economically trying only to rid the group of some extra tickets. I can tell you, I heard the details of that story many times!

During his four years at Amherst College, Al Havighurst watched the Kennedy motorcade leave campus following Kennedy's speech at the dedication of the Frost Library. That was only shortly before Dallas. He had a college buddy with a truly extravagant sports car the two went too fast in on the Massachusetts turnpike. That old friend apparently hangs out with The Donald and is a guest some mornings on CNBC. Frat parties had been a mainstay of campus life for my friend. We might surmise his brilliance by the fact that he graduated, and went on to law school, first at Columbia, despite his apparent lack of time to study! Al did keep up with US friends who were also in college in the east. Sandy Randt, once a US student, was at Yale with George Bush in those years. During one off-campus weekend both Bush and Al got thrown out of a party they crashed at the same time. Decades later, Bush made Clark T. (Sandy) Randt his Ambassador to China. During that administration Al did get cards with notes from the Embassy of the US in Beijing. One memorable correspondence, written by Sandy's wife, mentioned how charmed the Chinese people were to see the Randts out walking their dog.

Also while at Amherst, Al found his way to all surrounding campuses. He even took a course or two at Smith. There he hung out with the Smith gals, beginning a lifelong habit he was never able to break. One of his special Smith friends, Juliet Taylor, would later serve as Woody Allen's casting director. While Al was at Amherst, following in the footsteps of his two elder brothers, there had always been yet another Havighurst on campus too. That was another of Al's father's brothers, professor of history, Alfred Havighurst. Surely it would have felt secure to have family, Uncle Alf, nearby when that far from home; that far from Shaker Heights, Ohio.

The weekend of Alan's 13th birthday, and Doug will correct me if I don't have the details entirely factual, the family sheltie was hit and killed and their dad, Harvard attorney Jim Havighurst, senior partner in the Cleveland law firm now known as Thompson Hine, passed away. From that day forward nothing would ever be the same. Out of that overarching sadness grew Alan's love for the institution that would, for a few years, serve as a surrogate home for him. That was during the time while his mother tried to pick up the shattered pieces of her life. That institution is, of course, the University School Alan so loved.

I don't think the Havighurst family ever had a dog again. However, years later Alan took to my big old malamute, Luba. We were married when she died. Shortly we got another: Luba Juno. Alan contributed the name Juno. When our puppy cried a sound that could have easily been mistaken for Ma-Ma, our jaws dropped simultaneously. When she barked into the Dragon Speak microphone, and the computer typed out, "the moon over the moon over the moon moon moon," we printed it off and proudly showed it to all our friends. The day I slowly spelled the word, and Luba's favorite, I C E C R E A M, and she ran directly to the refrigerator, we delighted in the humor of that moment.

When, a decade later, our Luba Juno got cancer, the biopsy tissue was evaluated, by odd circumstance, at the Cleveland Clinic lab. That bill read, "due to obvious difficulties billing for veterinary biopsies, please consider this a professional courtesy." When we were told there was limited chance to save our Luba Juno, Alan still wanted to try. So, for several weeks he picked her up, and drove her for special radiation treatments. Alan and my father were in Champaign, Illinois, buying a new malamute puppy when the end came for our old pal. I was glad Alan was out of town. He was so sad when our Luba Juno died.

Over the decades of our friendship we went to movies together on New Years Eve any number of times. One of those nights we saw a movie Jodi Foster both directed and starred in: "Nell." It was, unfortunately, MY suggestion to see that specific film. During the movie, which was positively horrible, Alan would often glance in my direction with a parental scold look on his face. As that movie kept getting worse and worse, his glances my direction kept getting longer and longer. A nearly closed-lip, Cheshire cat grin became glued to his face. During the movie's peculiar courtroom scene he stopped watching the screen entirely, largely just staring in my direction with a fixed grin. I never came so close to bursting out loud laughing in a movie theatre in my whole life. Alan never let me live that one down. Years later, at the mere mention of "Nell" he would turn his head in my direction, tilt it slightly to the side, and give me a long, pooooo Julie, look.

The year after we suffered through "Nell" we went to the movie theater and thoroughly enjoyed "Babe." Alan was the one wiping tears from his cheeks that night. Years after that, one of the last movies we ever saw together on New Years Eve was "A Beautiful Mind." We both had sympathy for sure, empathy perhaps, for the brilliant man, the main character in the nonfiction story. For some, life is harder to live than even the most astute among us might guess.

Many thanks to the dear friends--US, Amherst, local attorneys, and otherwise--and to the health care professionals who helped keep Alan relatively happy, and largely in good spirits, for nearly seventy years. (Seventy had been the goal he often mentioned; at least it became his new goal once he made it to sixty-five.) Many thanks for those wise enough not to push too hard. Especially: many thanks to Dr. Spring, the professional who did more to help Alan than I was capable of understanding a quarter of a century ago.

Rest in peace dear one.

b. May 28, 1945 d. February 17, 2014