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"Good words, good spirits, good friends make for a good life"

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Downpours don't dampen 35th

Another year has come and gone with moments, some more profound than others, of sadness and, more so, of joy.

Atop that "joy" list was Malcolm and Joyce celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary on Dec. 11 during a five-night Caribbean cruise out of Tampa. It was a time for them to savor the simple joy of spending uninterrupted time together – just the two of them (and 2,500 other passengers, whom they mostly ignored). Malcolm had intended to surprise Joyce, just before departure, with dancing lessons, specifically the "shag." But, alas, two events intervened. First, it was a snow-ice storm that fizzled but caused cancellation of events, including the dance lesson. The next week, a few days before departure, the rescheduled lesson was axed again by an unplanned "trip." Leaving work, Malcolm's left foot slipped on gravel in front of the J-School. Trying to keep himself from falling, he stepped awkwardly to his right, his foot at an unusual angle, which resulted in him falling face first into the street. The result was a torn right quad (thigh) muscle in three places. He's in PT right now with a date for evaluation by the surgeon.

Nevertheless, the cruise went well despite Malcolm's need for a cane (which fit in with all the other old fogies) and the endless clouds and rain and rough seas that were the norm from the moment they left Lawrence until their return. "About 15 minutes of sunshine" during the entire trip, Joyce remarked. Even during stops at the Cayman Islands and Mexico, the downpours persisted. Frankly, Malcolm and Joyce loved the dark skies and rough seas (even if the other passengers didn't, as evidenced by the barf bags situated throughout the ship). Undaunted and unaffected, Malcolm and Joyce ate, and drank, and ate, and



Malcolm and Joyce in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, during their five-night Caribbean cruise to celebrate their 35th wedding anniversary. They spent a lot of time in the shops (dodging raindrops) and sampled the local cuisine.

shopped, and, well, ate. (Malcolm was particularly drawn, limping of course, to the soft-serve ice cream machine, "open 24 hours a day," he rejoiced).

And, of course, Malcolm ("Mr. Clumsy" to his doctor) tripped again, this time landing face down in Playa del Carmen, Mexico. Thankfully, two nurses from the cruise were nearby, as well as a restaurant with a veranda, where Joyce and Malcolm soothed his pains with good Mexican food, strong drink (margaritas for Joyce; Negra Modelos for Malcolm) and a good Cuban cigar (for Malcolm; Joyce stayed upwind). What better way to heal wounds: good drinks, a

good cigar and an ocean view?

On board, Joyce spent a lot of time at Bingo. (She didn't win anything, which is unfortunate because Malcolm spent a lot of his time [and money] at the art auction, where he "won" two pieces you can see when you visit).

A friend's passing: Malcolm and Joyce lost great friend Bob Menaker to brain cancer at age 61. (Malcolm and Bob truly loved each other as brothers.). Bob, a longtime Washington, D.C., journalist, ended his career as editor of the Jewish Times in Atlanta. Bob was the one who lured Malcolm from Joyce just before their wedding in 1971. Bob and Malcolm had been

friends for 40 years – they met in Gainesville while Bob was a senior in journalism at the University of Florida. They were roommates on three occasions, as well as traveling companions in Africa and workmates on Kibbutz Gonen in Israel.



Bob Menaker

Malcolm and Joyce grew close to Bob's wife, Dorothy, and their son, Ethan, as well as Bob's sister, Joan, and niece, Susan.

Malcolm and Joyce flew to Atlanta in September to spend a few "delightful" days with Bob. He was cheerful, intelligent (he's a former Jeopardy champ) and witty, as always. They spent hours and hours reminiscing, often punctuated with laughter. A few weeks later, he died. Malcolm went to Atlanta for the funeral. (Malcolm wrote a companion piece to the obituary in the Jewish Times. If you'd like to read it and the obituary, "Google" the Atlanta Jewish Times.)

Another wedding: In January, Malcolm and Joyce went to Gainesville, where "the Rev." Malcolm officiated at his second wedding, this one for Jodi Smith, one of Malcolm's favorite students at KU. She married Zach Higbee, who works in the athletics department at UF. The wedding went well, except Malcolm forgot to tell everyone to sit ("Tell 'em to sit down," Jodi stage-whispered a few minutes into the ceremony).

Malcolm has officiated two weddings, and the criteria for doing so are simple: students he's come to love and respect AND couples he is confident will endure as long as Malcolm and Joyce have.

Reunions: Malcolm reconnected with another old Army buddy, Andy Love and his long-time companion, Tessa McDonnell. (See photo on Page 2.) Finding Andy was a challenge – type "Andy Love" into Google and see the "racy" results – and the definition of serendipity. During Malcolm and Joyce's train trip to L.A. in '05 with Ann Brill and Larry Schmitz, they encountered a delightful waitress, "Charley." Malcolm, always the inquisitive one, asked where she was from. "Oh, a small town in Maine that nobody's heard of," she said. Malcolm said: "Madawaska." Her eyes exploded in surprise. "Yeah!," she yelped. Malcolm explained that he was searching for an old Army buddy,

A gathering of 'geezer' and 'geezer-ettes'



In Tampa, old friends from the Tampa Tribune and Clearwater Sun days reminisced. From left, Jackie and Al Hutchison, Malcolm, Dorothy Smiljanich, Leland Hawes, Carol and Charlie Robins, and Joyce.

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Serendipity on a train finds Love

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and he was from that “small town in Maine that nobody’s heard of.” Turns out, Charley was in Andy’s sister’s wedding. She promised she’d get his address. A couple of weeks later, she called. That resulted in Malcolm and Joyce and Andy and Tessa getting together in Dover, N.H., (not far from Jennifer and Adam) to catch up on old times in December ‘05 and, again, in June. More visits are planned.

- Andy and Ann Moor and daughter, Deb, visited this summer on their way out West. Malcolm met Andy the same time he met Bob Menaker when Andy and Bob were students at UF and Malcolm was reporting for The Gainesville Sun. Andy and Malcolm trekked to Africa and Europe in 1969, two years before Malcolm and Bob’s trip. The two had planned to write stories about Europe, not Africa. But they were leaving in January, and Europe was cold. So they searched the world for warmer climates, and Africa was it. What a life-changing decision for Malcolm, who continues to devote much of his energies to Africa.

- When Joyce and Malcolm were in Gainesville for the wedding, they reconnected with Don and Sue Graetz, close friends in the late ‘70s. They shared a lot of laughs and hugs over lunch with older son, Randy, and his daughter.

- Joyce and Malcolm, shortly after their ship made landfall in Tampa, hooked up with some friends from the Tampa Tribune and Clearwater Sun. Leland Hawes, Charlie and Carol Robins, Al and Jackie Hutchison, and Dorothy Smiljanich (an old C’water Sun crony) gathered at a North Tampa restaurant where they swapped tales and talked ol’ Florida politics.

As with the Graetzes, the two Andys (and Tessa and Ann), the Trib-Sun group, and virtually all of you, friendships are forever – no matter how long the silences.

Tom and Marge: Malcolm’s mom, Marge, celebrated her 91st birthday in March, and his dad, Tom, is not far behind at 84. They decided to weather any storms in ‘06 instead of coming to relatively safer Kansas, as they did for the ‘05 hurricane season. Both have



Here’s the annual holiday family portrait — this time taken in Ian and Cara’s apartment: Jennifer, Chris Gaudet, Joyce, Ian, Cara and Malcolm and, in front, Adam. Oh, and there’s Nemus, Ian and Cara’s Japanese cat in Joyce’s lap, and Morgan, Cara’s mom’s dog.



Malcolm and Joyce trekked to Chelmsford, Mass., in June to celebrate Malcolm’s and Adam’s birthdays. One of the group’s many outings was to the Duck Tour in Boston. It turned out to be a terrific experience, one they recommend highly.



Malcolm and Joyce got together again in June with Andy Love and Tessa McDonnell in Dover, N.H., for dinner. Andy and Malcolm, who reconnected the previous December, were Army buddies at Ft. Bragg, N.C., in the early ‘60s.

had some medical problems but are doing nicely despite them. Tom had some stints put in some key arteries, and he looks great since. Marge had some small cancerous tumors removed from her neck.

Here’s a snapshot of her recovery: Joyce and Malcolm visited her the day after the surgery. When they entered the room, Dad appeared to be dozing in a chair, and Mom, eyes shut and a blanket to her chin, appeared to be doing the same. When Joyce and Malcolm said “hi,” Mom flipped off the covers (revealing that she was fully clothed with shoes on). “I’m ready to get outta here!” she blared. Feisty as always – both of ‘em. As Malcolm has said many times – to them and everyone else – he couldn’t have picked better parents.

Jennifer and Adam: Jennifer, a pharmacy technician, continues to do well (after knee surgery) in Chelmsford, Mass., with grandson Adam, who turned 8 this year, and companion, Chris Gaudet. Jennifer and Adam come to Kansas at least twice each year and plan to come again this April. Malcolm and Joyce, of course, find their way there as often as possible.

Ian and Cara: Ian and Cara continue to live in nearby Olathe. Ian, who’s working at State Street (a Boston-based investments firm), took the LSAT and plans to attend law school at some point. Cara, who continues her efforts to attend dental school, plans to attend KU to pick up more biology classes. Their travels last year took them to several spots, including Jamaica.

At home: Both Malcolm and Joyce worked on the never-ending home improvement projects. For Joyce, the main objective was to paint virtually every room in the house. You must visit if just to sample the good food in the dining room that’s (appropriately) a Pepto-Bismol pink. Malcolm concentrated on the outside, carrying and placing about 300 landscaping stones (at 28 pounds each) to create (and to slow the water from rain runoff). Oh, and lots of energy on the old MG, too, which has a new engine and (knock on wood) has been running great. Only one tow needed this past year when a brand new water hose broke. He now carries a spare.

Visitors: Among the many overnight visitors this past year:

- Jennifer and Adam visited in February. (Sonic, the drive-in, which hasn’t found its way to Massachusetts yet, was a frequent stop). They, along with Jennifer’s companion, Chris Gaudet, also came for Christmas. A long trip, made longer by faulty Mapquest directions, to an Amish town in

Missouri resulted in grumbling from all, except Joyce, who found two long-sought-for items: a chicken pin and an elephant planter. In an Amish village? Go figure.

- One of Malcolm’s first and favorite students, Stephanie (nee Brewer) Lepow and husband, Ben, stopped on their way to their new home in Berkeley, Calif., after many years in Israel and Cyprus. Malcolm and Joyce attended their wedding in Connecticut.

- Charlie and Carol Robins came in August, during which the four, as usual, scoured all the Goodwill and Salvation Army thrift stores. Note to all: If you ever find a giraffe lamp (Malcolm found one — see photo at left — during one of their scrounging tours in Tampa), alert Charlie. He’s still chafing a bit that Malcolm found the lamp before he did — for a little more than \$7.

- In October, Paul and Corky Smeyak (from OSU in Stillwater, Okla., via KU and UF) came for the OSU-KU game (which was a bad idea, from Malcolm and Joyce’s perspective, because OSU killed favored KU). But the visit, otherwise, was wonderful.

As you can see, Malcolm and Joyce love visitors – the “vacancy” sign always shines brightly.

Well, that’s a bit of what filled Malcolm and Joyce’s lives this past year.. May your ‘07 be filled with good health and greater happiness.



The giraffe lamp

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