

Memorable Moments

Fred Gielow. 11-25-25.

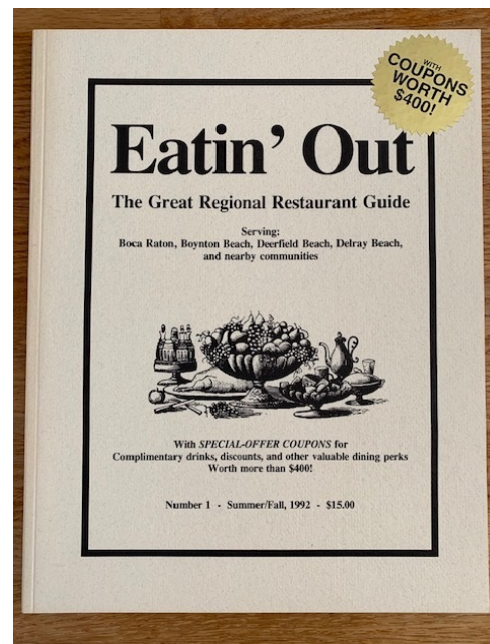
When I retired from IBM in 1991, I thought I should immediately get another job. I thought I was too young to stop working. But then I realized all my IBM experience was very specialized and finding a good-paying job would be difficult, if not impossible. Also, I had for some while, a nagging desire to write a restaurant guide. I thought I could produce a better one than other guides I had seen.

Several retired IBMers I knew were able to get hired back to the company as consultants. I was jealous of them because that seemed to be a validation of their worth. That kind of validation for me was not in the cards however, so I devoted myself to writing a restaurant guide.

My plan was to write a new guide annually, and that would be my business for many a year into the future. I had it all figured out.

But, my plan fizzled quite abruptly, when, after my first guide was published, I realized I was a newcomer in a very well-established market. (Photo by FCG.)

I had numerous competitors and each was far more experienced, far more established, and far better financed than was I. My future as a restaurant guide publisher looked bleak. I decided to bail. But, I'm getting ahead of myself.



While working on the guide, I found myself sitting in front of my computer screen day after day. I enjoyed it, to be sure, but the thought struck me: maybe I needed a break. Maybe I needed to get out of my house every now and then. Maybe I needed a little social contact.

Somehow, I learned of a local organizing meeting for Ross Perot's presidential campaign. That sounded interesting. Maybe I should attend. I did.

I had been interested in politics for many years, but while at IBM, I simply didn't have time to get very involved. Retirement gave me time.

One of the people I met at the meeting was Alice Holenbeck. We quickly became friends. After a period of time, we decided to attend an upcoming Perot rally in Dallas. It was a big deal, and numerous national politicians were scheduled to attend and give speeches.

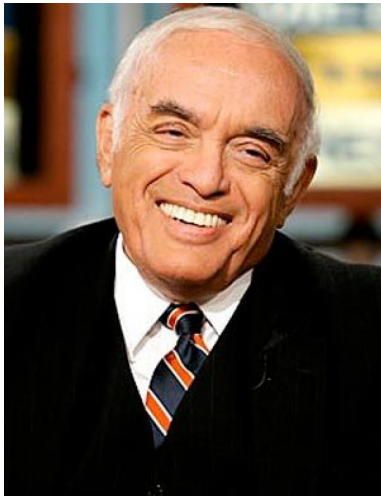
I don't recall exactly how it happened, but Alice and I were among maybe a dozen and a half people selected to meet Perot after the rally. We went up on stage where four or five rows of chairs had been set up for us. The curtain was closed. After a short time, Mr. Perot made an appearance and spoke to us.

I was thrilled to see him up close. I had watched him on CNN's Larry King Live TV show numerous times, but there he was in person right in front of us talking just to us. (Photo by CNN.com.)



Of course now, I don't remember a word he said. I think we were each allowed to ask a question. I have no idea what my question was.

There was an informal gathering of Perot supporters and other interested people at the hotel where we stayed. It was a large room, filled with politically-oriented people, some of them big names. Everyone was abuzz with chatter. Alice and I met some friends, but we needed one more chair for our group. I noticed an empty chair nearby and was surprised to see Bob Novak, noted columnist and journalist, sitting right next to it. (Photo by *The LA Times*.)



I nodded my head when our eyes met. "Excuse me." I said politely, "May I take this chair?"

His reply was immediate and short. "No," he said emphatically. I had to find a chair elsewhere. Actually, I suspect he was saving the chair for an acquaintance.



Reed Irvine, founder of Accuracy in Media (AIM) and its president for 35 years, hosted an annual AIM conference. One year when it was held in Los Angeles, Alice and I decided to attend. We were thrilled to meet Reed and

hear the conference speakers. They were outstanding. (Photo by FCG.)

Alice thought we should invite Reed to speak to a group of friends we had in the Fort Lauderdale area. We asked Reed, and he agreed. (Photo by not known. I'm with Reed Irvine, center, and Alice Holenbeck.)



Months later, on the day of our dinner meeting, I drove to the airport to pick up Reed and then brought him back to my home. He said he needed a brief nap before our meeting and asked to be awakened after an hour and a half (or whatever it was). The dinner was a grand success. Reed's comments about the Vince Foster incident were very informative and interesting.

Reed stayed overnight at my place, and the next day he was scheduled to speak at a women's club in Palm Beach (if I recall correctly). Just before it was time to give his talk, he said, "Why don't you introduce me to the group."

Well, that was certainly a surprise.

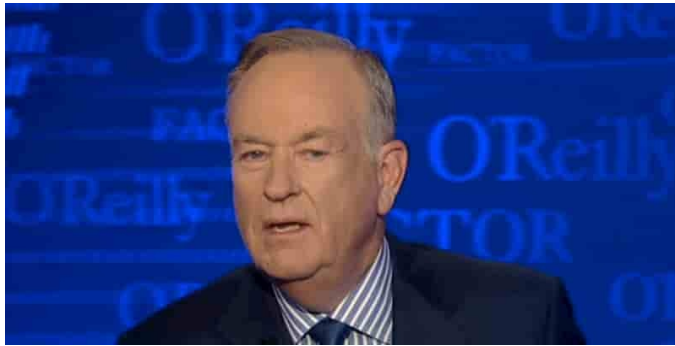
I did so, but felt I didn't give Reed the proper introduction he deserved.

I also drove Reed to a radio station where he was interviewed and where I took the photograph above while Reed was on the air.

A debate was part of one of AIM's conferences that was televised by C-SPAN. I attended the conference and surprisingly, Reed asked if I'd like to moderate the debate.



Holy cow! That was certainly unexpected. I don't recall the debate topic or even who the debaters were, but everything seemed to go fairly smoothly. Thank goodness! (Photo of TV screen by FCG.)



At another AIM gathering, this one in Washington, DC, the featured speaker was Bill O'Reilly, who at the time hosted the popular Fox News TV program The O'Reilly

Factor. After he spoke, he stayed for questions and maybe 15 people gathered around to hear his answers.

The key question asked was why wasn't he more aggressive in determining Barack Obama's actual birthplace. O'Reilly gave a surprising answer. He said he wanted to highlight the issue, but felt his reputation would be tarnished if he vigorously pursued it. I interpreted that to mean pressure from the Left kept such an investigation at bay. No one had directly told O'Reilly to keep hands off, but he sensed his commanding position in media would be undercut somehow if he pushed on a topic the Left wished hidden.

Once, I got a call from AIM with a request. It seems some organization in south Florida wanted a representative from AIM to debate the editor of the *Miami Herald*. Would I be interested in being that representative? Well, I wasn't sure I was up to the challenge, but with some reluctance, I agreed.

I had one advantage. I was retired, so I had days and days to prepare. The editor probably had no time for prep whatsoever.

I spent weeks, nearly full time, studying up and filling up a notebook with support materials. The day of the debate, my brother and I drove to the event. I don't remember if it was in Fort Lauderdale or Miami. The debate went pretty well. I had information to refute points the editor made, and I had plenty of material to make my own points. I think the audience was on my side. That certainly was comforting.

Cliff Kincaid, author, and president of America's Survival, Inc., worked for AIM for many years. Alice and I invited him to speak at another one of our dinner meetings. He graciously agreed. (Photo by: Wikipedia.)



After he spoke, I drove Cliff across the state to Naples, where he was to speak to another group. His schedule necessitated a motel stay for us in Naples.

In the morning just before checking out, I began a scan of our room. "What are you doing?" Cliff asked.

Whenever I check out of a room, I like to go around and make sure I haven't left anything. So, I was looking in every corner, checking under the beds and chairs, examining the bathroom. Then, I threw back the blankets on my bed, then on Cliff's bed, and there hiding in his blankets was his airplane ticket home. We almost left without it.



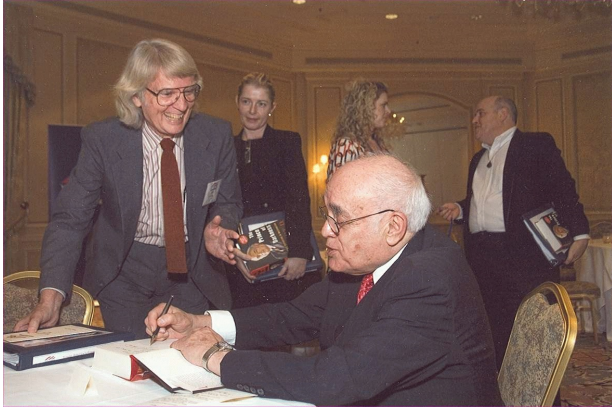
Alice and I attended a political picnic once and Oliver North was among the speakers. Walking around the grounds after the speeches, we came across North, and Alice asked him some rather blunt questions about the

Iran-contra arms-for-hostages scandal. I thought his answers were less than satisfying. (Photo by Foxnews.com.)

Once at a CPAC conference in DC, after Bob Novak had spoken, I chased him all the way out of the building and into the street where he was trying to catch a cab. I wanted to give him a copy of my book (*You Don't Say*).

I explained I thought he might enjoy it. He looked at me and with a straight face said, "Oh, I'll read every word."

Another time at a Young America's Foundation conference, I caught up with Novak again. I reminded him of the two previous times our paths had crossed. He said, "You hate me."



I insisted I did not hate him.

I'm not sure he was convinced, but I bought a copy of his latest book and he autographed it for me. (Photo by Young America's Foundation.)

Mike Thompson was for some years chairman of the Republican Party in Florida. He used to have a luncheon meeting once a month in the dining room of a beautiful hotel not too far from Miami (I don't remember the name). He invited prominent politicians to speak to a group of maybe 50 attendees. Alice and I attended many luncheons, and we enjoyed them all.

Pat Buchanan, who at the time was running for president, was featured at one such luncheon. When Alice and I entered the room, he walked right up to me and said, "Fred, so nice to see you. I'm Pat Buchanan. Thanks for coming." (Photo by Americanmind.org.)



I was startled for a moment. Until I realized I was wearing a name tag.

I was a fan of Glenn Beck. I listened to him on the radio, then

later, watched him on his own TV show. So when I heard a book-signing for his book, *An Inconvenient Book*, was scheduled, I wanted to be there. I think the location was a book store in Boynton Beach, Florida.

Not surprisingly, there was a long line of people waiting to see him. It stretched along every aisle of the store and out the door.

Before my turn came, someone from a local radio station cut in and interviewed him for ten minutes or so. I was exciting to meet someone I so admired. (Photo by FCG.)



Charlton Heston spoke on behalf of the NRA at one of the CPAC conferences I attended. I went through the book-signing line once to buy his book, then a second time to give him a copy

of *my* book. (Photo by CPAC.)

It was fun meeting and speaking, albeit briefly, with Moses.

I attended a dinner in Washington, DC to honor Paul Weyrich, founder of the Free Congress Foundation. There were two notable incidents that evening. First, when Laura Ingraham entered the building, there was a definite rise in excitement level. She had an entourage about her like she was some sort of princess. It was rather stunning to see. When she spoke, everyone listened attentively.

Second, I found I was seated at a table with Mike Pence. He was on the other side, so I didn't have a chance to speak to him directly, but it was fun to share a meal with the future vice president.

Benjamin Netanyahu spoke at a Hillsdale College meeting (it may have been in Naples, Florida). I was lucky enough to be one of a limited number of attendees to meet him in person. What an honor. What a treat. What a privilege! (Photo by Hillsdale College.)



I asked if he thought that long term, freedom would prevail. He said only if conservative groups like Hillsdale College continued to aggressively spread the truth.

Author Jerome Corsi spoke at one of the conferences I attended, and I was pleased to meet him. He had just published his book, *Obama Nation*. I thought that was one of the most clever book

titles I had ever seen. He told us lots of details about the Obama administration.



Peggy Noonan spoke at a Hillsdale College program I think was in Palm Beach, Florida. My brother and I were able to exchange a few words with her after her talk. I asked if she thought liberals or conservatives would ultimately win the

ideological battle. She pondered my question for several moments. “That’s a good question,” she said. As I recall, she wasn’t comfortable making a prediction. (Photo by Hillsdale College. LTR: My brother, me, Peggy Noonan.)

At another Hillsdale College program – this one might have been in Naples, Florida – I was able to meet and briefly speak with Sean Hannity. Just as we began to converse, his cell phone rang. Sean put his left hand on my shoulder and said to me, “Let me take this.”

Apparently, it was a call with an update on how sales were going with his new book. From Sean’s reaction, I surmised sales were going very well indeed. (Photo by Justconservative.com.)



At yet another Hillsdale College gathering, my brother and I met Brit Hume. I asked him why more attention at Fox News had not been directed toward determining Barack Obama's

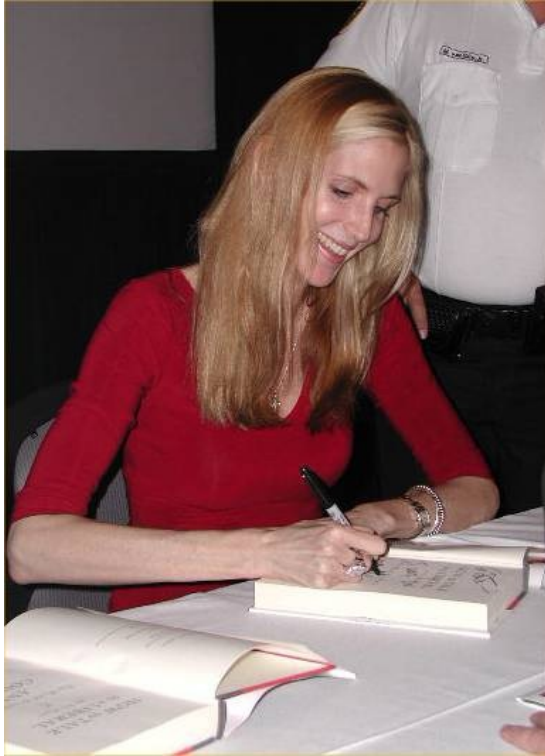


actual birthplace. He scoffed at me, saying Obama's parents would never have expected, when he was born, that he would run for US president, so there was no reason whatsoever for them to go out of their way to get Obama a US birth certificate.

It occurred to me that a US birth certificate would confer many US citizen benefits for him and his parents. I thought that could indeed be a reason. I was surprised at the coarse language Brit used during our brief conversation. I didn't expect that from him. (Photo by Foxnews.com.)

I saw Tucker Carlson in a waiting lounge at the Reagan International Airport one Saturday morning. He was waiting for a flight to California (if I recall correctly). I wanted to approach him and tell him how much I enjoyed his program on Fox News, but I hesitated. I then concluded I might wish to speak to him more as a feather in my cap than as a compliment for him. Besides, there was a flock of adoring fans surrounding him jabbering away incessantly. I didn't bother him.

I learned that Ann Coulter was going to give a talk in February, 2005 at a Boy Scouts meeting in Fort Lauderdale (I think that was the location).



I had read several of her books and was anxious to attend the gathering. (Photo by FCG.)

It also turned out to be a book-signing event, so I got in line to buy her latest publication. I was impressed how she took time to speak with each person. She wasn't there to churn out books and autographs in rapid succession. She took a genuine interest in conversing with each person in line. The downside was that since the line was quite long, the wait

was likewise. I think it was over an hour.

Freedom 21 was an organization founded by Henry Lamb. It consisted of patriots from across the country who were concerned about the future of America and anxious to protect our freedoms. (Photo by FCG.)



I decided to create a non-profit (501c3) organization for the purpose of making tax-empt contributions to conservative groups. It was called the Gielow Family Foundation and it consisted of my brother, my two sons, and myself.

After attending several Freedom 21 conventions, I thought I'd

like to present some awards to conservatives I greatly admired. Thus was born the Gielow Family Foundation Friend of Freedom Awards.

I obtained six eagle statues and gave them out at the July, 2001 Freedom 21 convention (I think it was held in Reno, but maybe it was Dallas). Recipients were Michael Coffman, Tom DeWeese, Reed Irvine, Henry Lamb, Ron Paul, and Phyllis Schlafly.

At a dinner ceremony on the last day of the conference, I made the presentations. It was thrilling for me. When Phyllis Schlafly received her award, she said, “Oh, another eagle statue. How nice. I’ll add it to my collection.” (Photo by FCG.)



One detail I hadn’t considered: how the recipients would get their awards back home. I spent hours in my hotel room wrapping them for shipment.



I was invited to participate in a script writing project. I think Henry Lamb came up with the idea, but Tom DeWeese (founder of the American Policy Center) was an active participant.

Tom invited the group – maybe a half dozen people – to his home in Virginia to discuss the project. He served us thick, juicy steaks right off the grill and they were delicious! (Photo by FCG.)

The idea was to write a series of TV scripts that would advance the cause of freedom and conservative values. It wasn't a pie-in-the-sky idea. Apparently, some sponsors and supporters had already agreed to participate.

I was selected to actually write the scripts with input from the others. I decided to use my website as a staging area. I posted drafts there on a web page known only to the participants.

We made good progress, but then after a number of months, things came to an abrupt halt. I don't remember why the plug was pulled.

Dr. Fred Singer, well known and respected atmospheric and space physicist, and founder of the Science and Environmental Policy Project and the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change, spoke at one of AIM's conferences. I met him and we talked briefly. (Photo by FCG.)



He said he was going to be speaking in south florida at a later date and would be driving north on 95 after his talk. I wondered if we could meet for lunch, since at that time I was living in Boca Raton. He agreed.

My brother and I got to the restaurant well before our expected meeting time, and we waited at the entrance for Fred. We looked carefully at each person entering the restaurant. I had forgotten what Fred looked like.

Apparently, he had forgotten what I looked like, too, for he walked right past us. I was thinking, “Is that Fred Singer? I’m not sure. It could be. Yes, maybe that’s Fred.” After several moments, we went inside and found he was already seated. “Fred Singer?” I asked cautiously. It *was* Fred Singer.

I asked if he had ever tried grilled artichokes. That item was a restaurant specialty. He said no, but was eager to take a taste. He enjoyed them!

Over the next several years, during a period when I was visiting DC every three months, Fred and I would meet for supper on Friday or Saturday evening. Once, he asked if I had ever tried calamari. I said no, but when I tried it, I liked it.

Dr. Michael Coffman was an author, researcher, speaker, and major player in the fight against Agenda 21 Sustainable Development. He was president of Environmental Perspectives, Inc., executive director of Sovereignty International, and was very active with Freedom



21, speaking often at Freedom 21 conferences. It was an honor and treat to know Michael. (Photo by FCG.)

In 1994, the Senate was on the verge of ratifying the Biodiversity Treaty. At the last minute, with the help of his senator, Dr. Coffman presented a map showing the consequences of the treaty, namely how the country would be partitioned into small pieces each of which would be in one of three categories: human

activity allowed, human activity limited, or human activity prohibited. Once the Senate saw how the treaty would literally destroy America, it overwhelmingly voted against ratification.

The moments described above were related to politics in one way or another. But, I experienced a number of absolutely unforgettable moments that weren't. Here are a few examples:

Do you remember the "Real People" TV show on NBC? It debuted in 1979 and was on the air for five years. A barbershop quartet I sang in (with Pete Donatelli, Anton Grosz, and Mike Myers) was included in its program about barbershop singing. Apparently, the producers got a kick out of our monk's robes and act, because they used a segment of it for their show opener.

Anyway, years later the four of us were invited to LA to appear on the big, "Real People" reunion show, October 1, 1991.



During the broadcast, one of the hosts, Skip Stephenson, came over to us and said a commercial break was coming up shortly, and he wanted to sing with us just before the break. "Think up something we can sing," he said. Then he darted off. (Photo by: <http://video.search.yahoo.com>.)

We knew whatever we sang had to be short and it had to be easy for Skip to learn. We figured a barbershop tag would do the trick. I suggested we sing a four-chord tag: "Mother of mine," and use the words "We'll be right back."

Skip appeared again moments later, we taught him his part, and seconds after that, the five of us sang the tag on national television.



TV can be very exciting. (Photo of my black-and-white TV screen during the show's broadcast. LTR: Pete Donatelli, Anton Grosz, Skip, Mike Myers, me.)

By the way, just for fun, I made the following inquiry to ChatGPT: "A barbershop quartet dressed as monks was featured in the Real People TV show opening."

ChatGPT responded:

"Yes — you're remembering correctly.

"Real People used a quick comedic montage in its opening credits, and one of the recurring bits was a barbershop quartet dressed as monks.

"They wore brown monk robes with hoods and began by chanting in a mock-Gregorian style, then suddenly snapped into barbershop harmony. It was part of the show's trademark humorous visuals alongside other 'real people doing quirky things.'

"This wasn't a full segment of the show — just a short gag used in the opening title sequence during the early seasons

(typically cited around 1979–1981).”

Way back around 1980, a barbershop singer acquaintance (Bob Betcha) got to talking with someone seated next to him on a flight. As it turned out, the guy was working on plans for a Fourth of July picnic at the White House. Bob Betcha said, “Well then, I suppose you’re looking for some barbershop quartets to perform.”

The guy said he hadn’t thought about that, but it was a really great idea. “Do you know of any quartets?” he asked.

“As a matter of fact, I do,” replied Bob, and he suggested the quartet I was singing in.

Shortly after that, I received a letter from the White House with an invitation to perform July 4th, 1981. Several other quartets were also invited.



Oh my goodness, what a thrill! We sang outside the White House on a specially-built platform on the South Lawn. It had been raining heavily most of the morning and we thought there was a good chance the whole event might be cancelled. The rain stopped

literally minutes before the picnic was scheduled to begin.
(Photo by the White House. LTR: me, Fritz Jones, Mike Myers,
Pete Donatelli.)

The picnic was intended for White House employees and their families. Apparently, their level of appreciation of barbershop singing wasn't particularly high, and consequently, we didn't have much of an audience. Not much at all! But the White House barber was there and he loved our singing. At least that's what he told us.

One of the songs we sang was written and arranged just for the occasion. It was "The Jelly Bean Song." President Reagan didn't hear it, and that was a disappointment.

I was hoping we might be able to meet him, but that was out of the question. He had been shot March 30th and White House security was very tight. However, that evening he did make an appearance and gave a nationally-televised speech, his first since the assassination attempt.

I had brought along a copy of my book to give to the president. I had wrapped it in cellophane for easy inspection, and I gave it to an agent, who said it had to be X-rayed. A week or two later I received a very nice thank-you note signed by the president. (Well, probably via the auto-sign pen.)

Rush Limbaugh's TV show aired from 1992 to 1996. At one point, Rush invited viewers to create short video clips, the best of which would be shown on his broadcast, one each week.

Well, I thought that was a challenge I couldn't refuse. I made a video of myself saying something political and submitted it. Not

surprisingly, the clip didn't air. Come to think of it, that probably was a good thing. And besides, it was way too long. (Photo by YouTube of Rush's September 22, 1992 show.)



Then, I thought perhaps a barbershop quartet would interest Rush, so I asked the group I was then singing with (Walt Costello, George Nagy, and Dick Wenzel) if they'd be willing to give it a try.

Walt, a died-in-the-wool liberal, objected. Strenuously. He wanted nothing to do with anything conservative, and certainly nothing to do with Rush Limbaugh. But after some serious encouragement – bordering on pleading – Walt reluctantly agreed to participate. He probably figured there was zero chance the clip would air.

At the time, it was early in Bill Clinton's presidency, and I came up with some words to the song "Happy Days Are Here Again." We had an arrangement that was easy to learn and sing. My new song was titled, "Crappy Days Are Here Again."

*Crappy days are here again.
For it's tax and spend I fear again.
Four more years to shed a tear again.
Crappy days are here again.*

There was a second verse, but I don't remember what it was. We dressed ourselves in bedraggled clothing and recorded the song in my living room. I packaged up the tape and sent it off.

Wonder of wonders, in a week or two, our video was shown on Rush's program. That was a real kick!

So, with such a grand success behind us, I thought maybe we could submit another song. What came quickly to mind was "My Wonderful One," since we could portray *Rush* as the wonderful one, and we already had a barbershop arrangement of the song.

This time, simply singing the song wouldn't be enough. I set up my living room with a series of props. We were all dressed up in suits and ties. As we sang the song, I released a string that plucked off a small white covering to reveal a copy of one of Rush's books. Then later, I released another string, and the sheet covering my big-screen TV fell to the floor, revealing a video of Rush's TV show playing.

Of course, this was not accomplished without a number of takes. And also with all sorts of fun and excitement. And occasional gales of laughter. The short clip took probably four hours, maybe more, to complete.

And the best part: our video made it on Rush's show again!

It was a real treat to meet Roy Boehm, who led what became the US Navy SEALs as the first Officer in Charge of SEAL Team Two. A friend of mine introduced us. He gave me this photo.



It was inspiring to hear

some of his stories and thrilling to meet such a hero. During his career, he was shot at and attacked by man-eating sharks. He evaded flamethrowers in Vietnam. And here in the US, he was targeted for assassination and court martial.

He authored the book *First Seal*, published in 1997, and when he signed a copy for me, he wrote, “Freedom is a fragile flower. It must be protected and nourished.”

Oh my, oh my, how lucky am I! I’ve experienced far more than my share of memorable moments.

I’m thankful for each and every one of them.