



## Meet Your Church Family



Dayne and Pam Carlson

August 12, 1975.

On this date, Dayne was in a holding pattern sandwiched between the completion of four years active Army service, ( spent largely on an Army base in Germany ), and reporting for university studies at Tarleton State University in Stephenville. Temporarily home on his family farm in Georgetown, he planned to spend an ordinary day helping out a friend at the filling station where he worked. Dayne's friends all knew they could ask him for help at anytime for anything. His reputation had been established long ago.

Attending requisite duties, the day progressed with all the excitement one might logically expect from filling station employment, but transfigured rapidly upon the arrival of a particular vehicle, driven by a friend of their's, but bearing a young lady Dayne had never met before. She sat in the passenger seat. One of those inexplicable, indescribable, cosmic events descended upon Dayne, seared the exact date into his memory, and altered his life forevermore.

Pam's recollection of that particular day appears less deeply etched in her mind, but she shares the tale of a vivid event which occurred roughly eighteen months later. She and Dayne were newly married and freshly relocated into off-campus housing in Stephenville. The pair was living temporarily on cash-in-hand plus savings. Inevitably, the day soon arrived when rent and utilities came due. Pam opened Dayne's checkbook to settle their debts, focused on the balance therein, and let out a whoop:

*"You've got no money!"*, she exclaimed.

*"I have \$ 1.58!"* came the reply.

*"But what happened to your money?"*, she implored.

*"I spent it all on getting YOU!"*, Dayne exclaimed.

And he had, too. He hadn't exactly stalked her following their first blind date, but almost every weekend when she came home from work he seemed to be waiting there, visiting with her parents in their living room, frequently polishing off a slice of her mother's homemade pie. A three hundred mile round trip from Stephenville to Austin and back every weekend adds up to some ching-ching over time. Dayne's reasoning was - he knew what he wanted and he aimed to get it. Tenacity is in his character.

For a period they fell back onto migrating instincts built into virtually every living creature, an instinct particularly notable in birds, whales, caribou and young humans in their university years - they recalled where food had been plentiful before and returned there frequently. They typically dined at Pam's parental home in Austin one day, then feasted on the traditional Sunday mid-day spread at the Carlson home the next. Both families sent them off with supplies, and Emory Carlson settled the pre-wedding deal he made with his daughter-in-law to be - if she would grant him a tuxedo exemption at the wedding, he would cover a month of groceries. In this manner they survived.

Dayne's degrees in Criminal Justice, along with his military experience, led to a career with the US Treasury Department which later rolled into what is now known as Homeland Security. His career led them to Washington where they resided for twenty-two non-continuous years. Pam held a dual degree from UT Austin, Social Studies and Education. Never a teacher in the formal manner she intended, her career nevertheless made use not only of her innate research and organizational skills, but of her educational knowledge as well. Pam served in many IRS leadership positions over her thirty-two year career which included ten years as an Executive Officer.

Dayne declares the best job he ever had was at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glenco, Georgia. He was a trainer in charge of teaching "young pup" agents the techniques necessary to fulfill their duties and survive. Inside the "Shoot House" was a subsection known, chillingly, as the "Fatal Funnel". We may speak cavalierly about the training, but it was deadly serious. It had to be. This was no game. For every exercise, the trainees were assigned to teams. They were "bad guys" or "good guys", carried real guns with special bullets which sprayed an ink in "team colors" on contact. These bullets traveled 800' per second and packed a significant pop on impact.

One day, two young female trainees were poised to enter the "Fatal Funnel". Their job was to dispatch all "bad guys" that might leap out from anywhere. They would be shot at, and knew it. Observing from his instructor's station, it was clear to Dayne they were terrified to enter, a normal reaction he saw often. He hollered out - "*You have to go in! What are you going to do?!*" One turned her face to him and yelled back, "*I'm gonna call 9-1-1 !*" It was a struggle, but Dayne maintained professional composure while all about him were losing their's. He yelled back, "*YOU ARE 9-1-1!*"

She went on to become a heck of a good agent!

Dayne has a natural facility with languages, partly because of the way his brain is wired, but also because of where and how he grew up. Although his parents and grandparents spoke English primarily, they were also fluent in Swedish. Within their own homes, his grandparents spoke Swedish. A great uncle lived with Dayne's family much of the time, he and Dayne were close buds - the lingo rubbed off with ease. Raised on a farm, as a boy he often helped out on neighboring farms, many of which hired help from south of the border. He learned Castilian Spanish in High School, but Tex-Mex in the fields. Don't go to a Mexican Market here in Georgetown and ask for "huevos", he cautions. Instead, ask for "los blanquillos" - meaning "the white ones" or, simply, "eggs". While stationed on our Army base in Bavaria, he picked up enough German to make his needs and wishes known, and to stay out of trouble.

Both he and his sister, Beverly Thompson, were raised in St. John's to be strong in their faith. A quote from John Wesley, long considered one of the founders of the Methodist Church today, moulded Dayne from when he first heard it as a child:

*"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, for as long as ever you can."*

What a lot of beautiful language we have lost over time. John Wesley's words are like a song, most beautiful if you live it - as Dayne does. He and Pam both recognize the value and importance of service, not only within their church and family, but out into the larger community as well.

For several years, Dayne has overseen the care and maintenance of St John's Cemetery ( no longer directly connected to St John's Church ), and he volunteers at The Caring Place two days every week. His involvement in our church is extensive - he either has or still does serve in numerous capacities, Steven Ministry, Men's Choir and Chancel Choir, usher, liturgist. In his role of Santa Claus, there are none better. Soon, he will serve as Trustee. We could dub him our Energizer Bunny.

Two of Pam's favorite philanthropic organizations are *Seeds of Strength* and *P.E.O.* She joined *Seeds of Strength* several years ago, and was quickly recognized as a tremendous asset to their Grants Committee. Both organizations promote various forms of assistance for women - education, inspiration, family issues, health, environment, and the arts to name a few.

Pam's talents and interests converge to conceive, plan, document and illustrate their favorite leisure time activity - TRAVEL. By land, air or sea - no matter, they indulge their pastime whenever possible. They have traveled with Walking Adventure tours, for stints of approximately two weeks each to Europe, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, Russia and our own Smokey Mountains. They've enjoyed River Cruises on the Rhine, Danube, and Yangtze. Ocean cruising has taken them to the British Isles, the Mediterranean, and the Amazon.

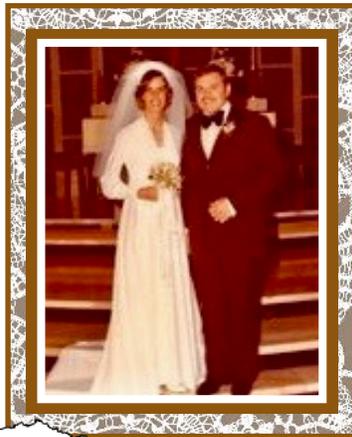
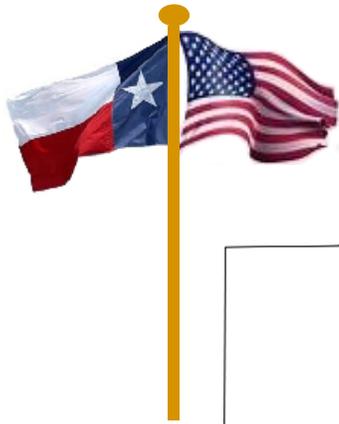
Three trips have been on their own to Scandinavia, not surprising given Dayne's generations long Swedish heritage. On their first trip to Sweden, Dayne's chief impression was how very clean it all seemed to be. Emotions surfaced on their second trip when they tracked down and visited the exact farms where his ancestors had lived, along with the churches where they worshiped, one of which included the baptismal font where his great-great-grandmother was baptized. Not everyone is privileged to experience their ancestral roots in such a visceral way. Dayne's strong attachment to his ancestral history leads him to treasure special relics that remain. The antique farm truck his father used, for instance, has been restored, repainted and is protected as the crown jewel it is, safe in his own garage. Locked up. Guarded and protected by a retired agent of Homeland Security who, you should remember, navigated and survived the "Fatal Funnel" several times. Just sayin'.

By the way, if you ever have the opportunity to examine one of Pam's "Memory Books", you are in for a treat. They are beautiful! Following every vacation, she spends weeks on her computer, laying out the photos, typing in historical text, then forwards her work to Shutterfly for printing. These books lovely to see, are a treat today, and will one day be treasured by someone who follows behind.

Let us never, ever forget our history! These two understand. We all must!

*Dorothy Newcomb*

PHOTOS FOLLOW ON THE VERY NEXT PAGE(S)



Emory, Ruth, Beverly & Dayne Carlson, circa 1954



A guy and his truck.



*Happy Hollow*



Pam, Dayne, & Ruth Carlson  
Pam's two sisters and their families  
2008

*Triple C Farm & Ranch*



