

Knight Family Calendar



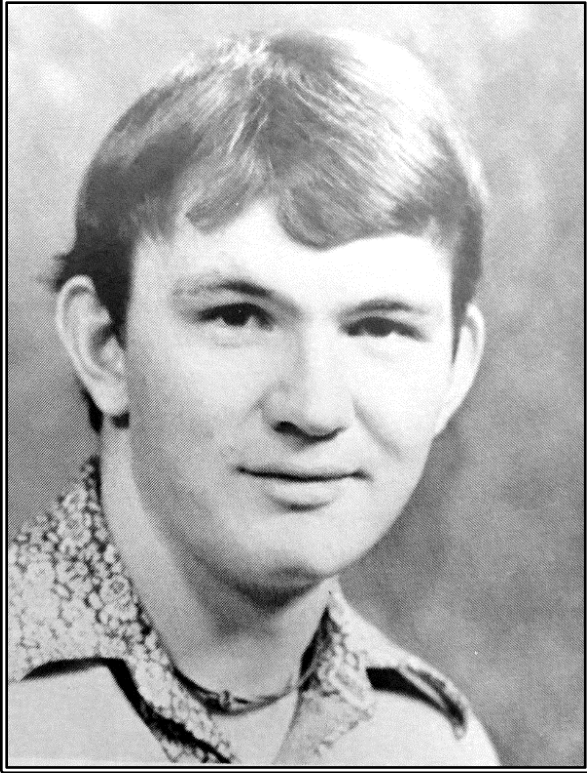
25 Years

A quarter century ago, in the fall of 1991, Mom showed me a collection of poems she had penned. Some were contemporary, others she had written earlier in her life. I immediately thought to use them as the basis of a family calendar for the year 1992. It was Mom's gift to her children, grandchildren and all the other people that make up her family, and our calendar tradition was born. We followed in 1993 with an edition featuring old family photos, and have continued ever since with a variety of different themes. This is the twenty-fifth. Although Mom passed away in 2002, I hope you still see our calendars as her legacy and her gift to you for many years yet to come.

The Kemps and Knights recently gathered for a special K Cousins reunion at Kathi and Gene's home in Las Vegas. Technically, we're first cousins "once removed" but we grew up contemporaneously, and that distinction is meaningless to us. This calendar is a record of the fun conversations we had about the important topics of our day. Things like the Beatles, how we learned to drive, and games we liked to play. It was a spontaneous mixture of the very family chemistry that has supported our calendar tradition for twenty-five years. We hope you enjoy it and feel like you were there with us back in October, 2015.

Love, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Denny



TIMOTHY EMMETT KNIGHT

Class of '73

Dad had a new electric mower. One morning while trimming the lawn I ran over the cord and cut it in half. I think Dad got his temper from Denny.

- Tim, in the 1998 calendar

We recall Tim popping wheelies on his muscle bike with the banana seat, ape hanger handlebars all riding low and very cool on small wheels.

We remember Tim, the youngest of the K Cousins by several years, as a kind and thoughtful young man up to his tragic death in an automobile accident in the fall of 2000. He left behind two children whom he unfortunately never got to know, but he was a good husband to his second wife, Eileen, and a good stepfather to her children.

When the Kemp cousins gathered for our reunion in October of 2015, Tim was continuously in our thoughts and conversation, and we wished he had been there to tell us about his favorite games, how he learned to drive, what he thought of the Beatles, and the other important topics of this calendar.

"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, as long as ever you can."

- Tim's advice to us from the 1999 calendar

One summer morning Tim had spent some time hanging around the drainage ditch a block south of our house on Spruce. Returning, he commenced to torment Mick for the rest of the morning and into the afternoon. After several hours of this, Mick finally had enough and went after him in a case of brotherly righteousness. Tim mocked him again, running in circles, then speeding down Spruce to leap nimbly across the dry channel. He turned and taunted the lagging but still mad and very focused Mick, who finally reached the edge of the ditch and fell deep into the pit Tim had spent the morning digging and camouflaging.

Tim told us in the 1996 calendar that his most favorite meal was chili, sloppy joes and potato salad. He remembered it from a sledding party at Happy Jack catered by his mom. Nick and Barb were part of the fun, too.

Dad had seen the TV listings and had waited all week to watch his favorite television show and what he understood to be a special appearance of animals, presumably with Marlin Perkins there, to educate the audience and him on the various species. When Ed Sullivan announced, "And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, let's bring on the Animals," all he could say was "What the hell is this?!" over the thunder and screams of teenagers in his audience. News accounts of the performance say the audience went so wild Sullivan had to shush them several times, but I'm not sure Dad ever again trusted Sullivan's taste in variety acts when the curtain rose to Britain's Eric Burdon and the Animals.

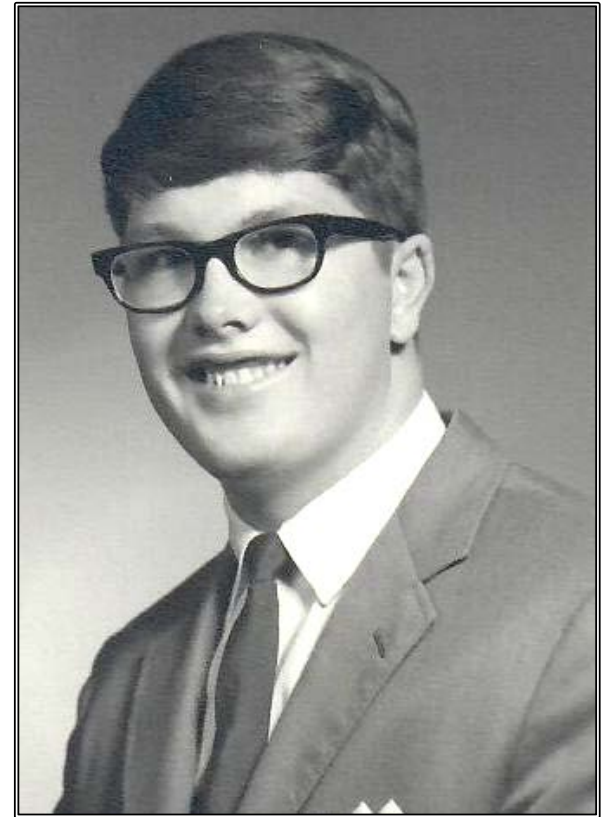
Mom taught me to drive, and by the time my turn came, she'd had plenty of experience. When I took my driving road test I was complimented on my skills, but I knew the compliment was really earned by Mom.

Sometimes Tim wanted to throw rocks at me for no reason. Being the great brother I was, I would give him permission, but I would limit him to stoning sessions of only two hours.

One summer when I was working at the Trail Lake Ranch, Chuck Cooper, the fellow that brought me and my brothers to work at the camp various summers, was doing some work in the new dining area. He knew better, but never bothered checking the breaker switch, so you can imagine his reaction when someone came through and snapped his picture using a flash camera.

My favorite food is beef stroganoff, using the recipe Mom got from Aunt Josie (the Kemp sisters' Grandma).

Mary Margaret is the most influential figure in my life, and the loving role she has taken in our lives together for 43 years.



MICHAEL DON KNIGHT
Class of '68

I learned the basics of driving from Mom, but to be honest, Mary Kay really did the teaching and, because of her, I passed my driving test the first time.

Dad would bring home from work what he called “hard tab” paper for us to play with. It was a thick paper stock used by the railroad, and we would use it to design our own paper dolls and clothing.

After I got my first Barbie Doll I would buy clothes for her every time I got a dollar.



PATTY KEMP KELLY
Class of '68

We had a new Dodge station wagon with stick shift when we lived in Baldwin Park. It was a big car and, Dad didn't know it, but with the seat down, we could pack in 14 girls to go to a football game.

The station wagon took up a lot of space. There was a drive-thru dairy store which would display bread on a rack for motorists to select as they drove to the window. Dealing with the intricacies of stick shifting and trying to fit the car through the narrow drive-thru lane. Jo Beth managed to knock the bread rack over.

George Harrison was definitely my favorite of the Beatles.

My favorite food is Bisquick oven-fried chicken, mashed potatoes and green beans.

Mom was my biggest influence. She instilled confidence in me and, with her, life felt safe.



MARY KATHLEEN KNIGHT GOODNOUGH

Class of '65

I loved to play with my brothers and would feel very included when they let me help them set up forts just to throw rocks at each other. They would play hard, but sometimes I would hook Mickey Don or Jim into dancing with me.

One morning after some cajoling, I got Jim to play house with me in the sandbox. As part of playing the dutiful husband, he asked me to pack him a pretend lunch, and off he went to work. He must have been a very hard worker, because he didn't come home again all day.

Mom would take me out in the country for driving practice. She instructed me to follow the first principle of twentieth century driving, "Follow the Line". But I thought she said, "Follow the Lights". No matter which way I turned or served, I would always be following the lights, but it didn't help me stay on the road.

Jim and I decided to pool our money and buy a record album. The one I brought home was by a group he had never heard of, but I promised (or demanded) "You will like it!". It was the Beatles' first album. Later, as America's fascination with the group erupted, we tried different ways to decode the secret messages in the music we'd heard about by playing the record backwards. We didn't learn anything.

Favorite food: cinnamon pudding

When thinking of my biggest influence in life, I fondly recall Sister Mary Theodata, my fifth grade teacher who was elderly but still in her teaching prime when she was serving at St. Laurence. She was patient and loving, and had a great sense of instilling confidence in her students. I was painfully shy, so Sister Theodata tried to bolster my self-assurance by assigning me to give a book report before the entire student body. When I rose to speak at the assembly, I stammered with stage fright and was not able to pull it off, but the event broke the ice for me, and I have never again been perplexed by the challenge of public speaking.

All four of us Kemp sisters attended St. John the Baptist School in Baldwin Park, California and the class sizes were huge, far too large for the nuns and teachers to do much more than even the basic instruction. At one point they split the school day in to two parts, and I would go in the morning and be home alone in the afternoon, while Jo Beth, Mary Kay and Charlene had the opposite schedule. Being home by myself, I spent a lot of time riding around the neighborhood on my 3-speed bike with the hand brakes.



CHARLENE KEMP SARGENT

Class of '65

Like children everywhere, we were constantly darting in and out of the house without much regard for interceding doorways. One time a pane broke as a result of my animated exit. Dad, when he came home from work later in the day spoke to me calmly, saying "Now, Charlene, you can't tell me you didn't slam that door." My punishment was the chore (and fun) of helping Dad replace the glass.

I was a terrible driver, and I had trouble passing driver's ed. But then Mom bestowed upon me the privilege of driving every day to pick up Grandma, and suddenly I became a good driver. It was a daily ritual to bring Grandma to have supper with us every day, and she often brought her own contributions to the meal.

One day I picked Grandma up and she had a beautiful lemon meringue pie she had baked for dinner. I got her situated in the car and she took custody of the pie for safekeeping on her lap. We didn't have far to go, but as we got on a ways there was a problem on the road ahead. In my inexperience, I probably applied a little too much brake, and of course the consequences are obvious. But I can tell you meringue sticks to windshields.

The biggest influence in my life has been Deepak Chopra, the Indian American author and promotor of spirituality. I love what he teaches, and he changed my view of life twenty years ago.

At various times, I, then Mick and then Tim, had opportunities to spend our summers working at the historic Trail Lake Ranch in the Wind River Mountains near Dubois, Wyoming. Since the 1930's, it has been an extension of the University of Wyoming, famous for programs on birding, wildflowers, rock art, wildlife, hiking, fishing and more.

That was where I taught myself to drive. It was in a jeep with a bent steering wheel and no brakes. If you really had to stop, it was a matter of shifting from fourth gear into reverse, which would kill the engine, but you would definitely stop, even if it involved a lurch.

Once I got involved with some of the guys in a timed race, each of us taking turns driving the jeep around a loop. Half way round, I lost control and rolled the jeep, regaining consciousness in a pile of cinder blocks.

Fortunately, I returned to Laramie at the end of that summer considering myself a masterful driver, even though I barely survived my driver's self-education curriculum.

I was ahead of my time, building my own skateboard which was nothing more than a two-by-four mounted on a pair of skates.

More important to me than what food is on the menu is enjoying it in the right atmosphere. With that, I can easily claim whatever I've eaten is the best I've ever had.



JAMES VINCENT KNIGHT

Class of '65

When asked about my greatest influence, I remember Sister Mary Theodata worked with me on my spelling which I admit was horrible and worse, but eventually she coached me into getting an A, at least for that one test.

I worked several summers during my school years at Knott's Berry Farm. One season there I had a great job interviewing visitors on the porch of the Candy Palace. It was a really a type of marketing survey that would give management data for future exhibit and event planning, and I took my responsibilities seriously. Once I approached a gentleman on the porch who handed me a business card. He told me not to turn the card over until I finished with my questions. When it was over, I turned the card over to reveal I had been talking to Jerry Van Orr, the CEO of Knott's Berry Farm. It was an early version of Undercover Boss.



MARY KAY KEMP
Class of '64

My experience at Knott's Berry Farm gave me boost in self confidence that lasted me through life and my long teaching career. I was active in my profession and attended many school board and union meetings over the years.

All of us kids had or shared old fashioned roller skates that clamped to the soles of our shoes with a strap at the back and a squeeze clamp at the front. A skate key was used to pull the two ends together to hold onto the shoe. I still have a skate key in among my memorabilia.

Favorite food: Baked chicken & rice with bread pudding for dessert.

"Dad was my biggest influence. He was so outgoing and confident."

When I was in high school I had gone to Laramie by train. I was riding with Kathi and Jim to Cheyenne for a football game when they had a flat tire. Jim pulled to the side, changed the tire in a jiffy, and proceeded. As the car got up to speed, I was reviewing in my mind the procedures Dad had taught me about changing tires and when I came to the end of my thoughts, I blurted, "Did you tighten the lug nuts?" Jim eased the car back to the shoulder, got the lug wrench out of the trunk, and finished the job.

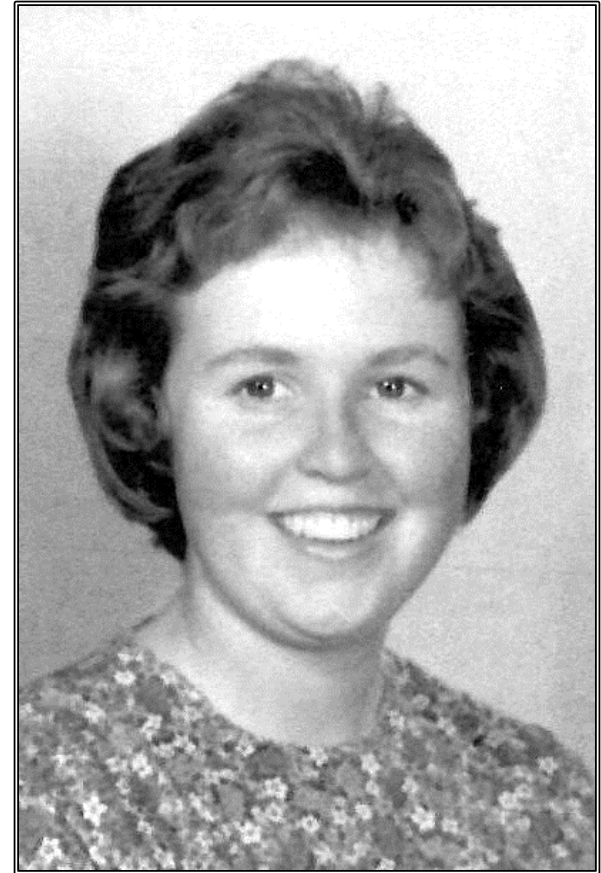
When I visited in Laramie with my grandmother, we went with the Knight family for a picnic in the Snowy Range. Grandma had purchased a bundle of 10 cent bags of candy that she planned to hand out to all the little kids at the end of our adventure. As we romped in and around the remaining snow and wildflowers on the high meadows, I fell into the creek, and blamed Jimmy for it. As we reminisced about it at our K Cousins gathering in October, I had to confess I had actually jumped into the icy water purely for the fun of it. Cold and soaking wet, I climbed out realizing I was about to incur the wrath of Grandma, and blamed it on Jim. Of course his punishment included the forfeiture of his promised bag of candy.

Mr. Presley, my driver's education instructor, would have the students drive to Ontario Orchards and make us drive close to the trees so he could pick oranges on the fly.

I contracted polio as a young child, and Dad took me to Pasadena twice a day for treatment. Mom thought I got it from sharing chewing gum with another little girl. As it turns out, polio can be transmitted orally, so she was probably right.

Favorite Game: playing baseball in the street with a manhole cover as first base. Also I loved to play hide n' go seek with my sisters and the neighborhood kids.

The biggest influence in my life is John. We do things together, whether it is rock hunting (his passion) or exploring quilt shops (mine.)



JO BETH KEMP RAABE

Class of '63

My first lesson in driving was from Oren Johnson when I was eleven or twelve. Oren let me take control of the steering wheel for a spin around the block at our house on Spruce Street, in front of which was a white picket fence. I wiped that out fence by oversteering at the end of Oren's lesson. Dad eventually replaced the picket fence with a stone one built from red rocks he collected a few at a time from Telephone Canyon. I checked a Google Maps image and the fence is still there.

I had plenty of drivers coaching from Mom on the dirt roads south of Laramie, but I did take driver's education at Laramie High, under the tutelage of Mr. Stevenson. One of his favorite instructional drills was to have the student practice an emergency maneuver, ditching the car in the barrow pit at a speed of about 30 mph. I passed that nicely even though Mom wouldn't let me practice it on her watch.

My Favorite meal is chicken fried steak, pan fried, potatoes home fried with onions, cream gravy, and green beans cooked with bacon. Most restaurants these days deep fry a kind of fabricated product and call it chicken fried steak, but now and then you find a real one.

Jerry and Maureen would take me ice skating at city park. The skates were always hand me downs and never quite fit. Sometimes I would get a pair of hockey skates with double tracks and other times I would have to stay upright on figure skates. I was always more of a wobbler than a skater.

The Knight kids went to St. Laurence School in Laramie. I was in the second grade when the school opened. Jerry and Maureen started then too. It was staffed by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Kansas, which happens to be the order that operates St. Joseph Hospital in Denver, the primary care hospital now for Jerry, Maureen and I.

The nuns at St. Lawrence were always bemused at how children invariably managed to make the best use of their precious breath and time by compressing the title of Sister into one compact syllable, as in "Yes, Stir" and "No, Stir."



DENNIS PAYTON KNIGHT

Class of '61

I am influenced by the generation that follows, my nieces and nephews, and especially my sons.

Although I didn't take Drivers Ed in high school, Mom taught me some of the fundamentals. When I turned sixteen I went to get my driver's license. At that time, the Wyoming State Patrol office south of Laramie conducted the road test and issued drivers licenses. I did very well as the Trooper had me drive in town and a little in the country. At the end of the road test he had me drive by the courthouse and told me to parallel park. I had never learned that skill and told the agent so, but he assured me I could do it. I proved I couldn't by leaving scrape marks on the adjoining parked car. The patrolman had me leave a note on the car providing my name and my parents' names too. I bawled all the way home and it was a couple of years before I decided to try again.

Favorite food: homemade noodles with chicken, and mashed potatoes.

Among my games and toys, my most memorable are the stilts Jerry and I made from cleats nailed to 2x4's. We would be so tall, hovering over the earth below. Being rolled down the street in a rubber tire had its charms as well.



MAUREEN ANN KNIGHT MACMILLAN

Class of '57

My big influences in life first were Mom and Dad but now it's my kids.

I was traveling to join Mac in Germany with my then three little kids, Nick (at 5, the oldest,) Barb and Charlie, and Dan was due in three weeks. On the flight from New York City to London, we occupied the front row in the economy section along the bulkhead, having been assigned that seating to make it easier for to manage my brood. In the adjoining row across the aisle were John Lennon, his first wife, and their Siamese cat. The kids were fascinated with the cat, and the Lennons enjoyed the children and offered them candy. I knew who Lennon and the Beatles were because I had seen them on Ed Sullivan just four days earlier but I apparently wasn't too star struck because I didn't ask for his autograph. I thing I remember most is he had the wildest set of eyebrows I had ever seen.



GERALD MICHAEL KNIGHT

Class of '56

*The greatest influence on my life was
Grandpa, just because of who he was.*

We went to a performance at the university by the U.S. Marine Band. Mom and Dad attended separately and were seated in another part of the theater. According to what we had read in the paper, the band featured a talented tenor saxophonist, except Dad didn't get the story quite right. Late in the show, when the applause died out between pieces, I heard Dad's distinct baritone voice impatiently boom through the performance hall, "When the hell is that tenor going to sing?!"

My first car was an old Plymouth I bought for \$40 from Fred Beman, the brother of our family friend, Lawrence Beman. It was a pretty good car for me, although I remember losing the brakes one time going over the viaduct, and the radio didn't work.

After I used it for a couple of years, I showed the Plymouth to a couple of popular football players from the university who were interested in it, Joe Mastrogiovanni and Ed Posa. I rode with them as they took a test drive and made their decision. When they learned the radio didn't work, Ed delivered a swift blow to the dashboard. It came on, worked perfectly, and they bought the car for \$40.

I had three favorite meals growing up, pork chops and hominy fixed by Mom at home, fried chicken at our grandparents, and grandpa's famous breakfasts which would include his delicious biscuits, oatmeal, eggs and sometimes fish.

It was Mom who taught me to drive. She would have me drive to the grocery store, then home in a loop that involved West Laramie. Once I got my license I could take the other kids to school. Jim remembers Mom saying I had a knack for making all the right turns to avoid traffic lights, but I don't remember that, and I'm not sure I did.

When I was little, I would cry whenever the song, "Old Shep" played on the radio. Once dad played a record about a train wreck with dead children. Maureen and I both cried, and I told Dad, "Don't ever play that song again." And I don't believe he ever did.



Kathi, Maureen, Jo Beth, Jim, Mary Kay, Patty, Charlene, Mick, Denny
K Cousins Reunion, October, 2015