

“MY FIRST BICYCLE” – A TRUE LIFE’S LESSON[©]

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It has been said that as we become more and more aged we develop a bit of forgetfulness, however, as I write this at my age of 82, I believe my own memory is totally Intact and there are a barrage of experiences in my days in the past that will never ever be forgotten! Amongst all of my own life’s experiences, you may wonder just why I have chosen this particular subject in which to express my sentiments! Well, what I have to say here is a tribute to my Mother and Father and just how they collectively showed their love and instilled responsibility into their five children - throughout our lives on this portion of our planet.

What I have to say here may not seem like much to today’s generations who seem to underestimate the costs and true value of almost everything! So, I would say to these youngsters, please do not take anything for granted and assume that everything is just waiting to be served to you on YOUR plate! But, like my own and everyone else’s parents, your parents will always be watching out for you! That’s what parents do!

The very first time that I ever learned how to ride a bicycle was when I was about 9 years old and a good friend allowed me to pedal his bike down the road. If you can recall your own first-time experiences, it was initially a somewhat “swerving & rocky ride” until you learned to balance the thing! Well anyway, I was grateful for the opportunity I had to ride my friend’s bike and sure would have liked to have one of my own.

It wasn’t all that long into the future that my Mother knew in her own mind just how much I wanted to have my very own bicycle; as loving to her 5 children that she always was, she took action accordingly! I wish I could still remember my exact age, but maybe by then I was 11 or 12! At that time I could actually mow lawns, shovel snow, clean windows at some local stores, and even do some farm work while still attending school. So, I had a pittance of an income – maybe \$10-\$15/week. Still, I had not owned my own bicycle and as my birthday approached in July, my Mother found a used bicycle at a cost of \$25. So, for my birthday present, she put a \$5 down payment on the bike and the balance of the cost was left for me to pay off! I did just that and was so proud to finally “own” my very first bicycle – thanks to my Mother’s initiative and a lesson never to be forgotten! The lesson: if you want something, work for it, and it will be yours! Those of us who were fortunate enough to spend our early years in Iowa pride ourselves in having an “inbred work ethic” that is in fact NOT closely matched by many others!

