

Some of the things I remember about my Father and will be forever grateful for.

My Dad was stationed at an Air Force Base in Texas when I was born, so thanks to him, I am a Texan.

One of my earliest memories of my Dad was when I was about 3 and he built a sandbox for me, we went to Davidson's Hardware Store to buy the sand together, and while I could build a mountain of sand he showed me how to build a tunnel through to the other side.

Another one of my earliest memories was climbing up a big chair by the door and jumping off the armrest every morning to give my Dad a big hug goodbye when he left for work.

When I was 4 my Dad taught me how to feed a marshmallow to a giraffe. The giraffe couldn't reach down that far so he had to lift me up to its mouth and I was scared when that long tongue wrapped itself around my whole hand. My Dad stood tall.

My Dad taught me that BBQ sauce is better than just ketchup.

My Dad tried to teach me to eat sardines; that never did work.

My Dad always took me with him to get our Christmas tree and taught me how to pick out best one. We always decorated it together and he showed me the right way, something that inspired any creativity I have to this day.

My dad taught me to like old movies when I was five years old, although that was because I snuck out of bed to watch while he was fast asleep on the couch.

My Dad taught me how to build with tinker toys, Lincoln logs & we even made ceiling- scrapers together with girders and panels that had a real electric elevator.

My Dad taught me how to ride a bike with training wheels.

My Dad taught me how to ride a bike without training wheels.

My Dad tried to teach me how to use the brakes to stop my bike, but that took a little longer and a few minor injuries.

My Dad taught me how to fish, even though he did the worm part.

My Dad taught me how to row a boat. After we went around slowly in a confused circle, my Dad even helped me out by taking over. Next time, Dad rented a boat that had a motor.

My Dad helped take care of me when I was sick in the middle of the night.

When I was six years old and had been in the hospital for a long time, and they had one more medical test to do but it was not scheduled for another week, my Dad made them give me the test the next day so I could go home.

My Dad taught me how to tie my own shoes, I was very confused.

My Dad taught me just the right way to put lights, ornaments & ice cycles on a Christmas tree, and in that order.

My Dad always ate the Christmas cookies and drank the milk that I would always put out for Santa Claus, but he never ever admitted it.

My Dad always made sure we had great family vacations and got quality time together.

My Dad taught me how to find sand dollars and sea shells underwater.

My Dad taught me how to churn homemade ice cream. Now they have electric ones.

My Dad taught me how to play baseball; I wasn't any good at it.

My Dad taught me how to shoot off fireworks, I got better at that after I burned my fingers a few times.

When I was interested in learning about the Civil War, my Dad made sure we went to battlefields.

My Dad taught me respect for the flag when I was 9, and by doing that, made me understand to this day what America should stand for and what I should stand for.

My Dad taught me aerodynamics, but I never really understood it at the time.

My Dad taught me how to mow the lawn when I was 10. After I got over that adventure and big loud motor part, I didn't like it much.

My Dad stood around for hours bored to death watching me while I watched vampire bats at the zoo, but he stayed with me anyway.

My Dad took me on trips to go find wild bats, and he probably skinned his head a lot on the ceilings of caves and abandoned mines. I am not responsible for his loss of hair; that was his Fathers fault.

My Dad didn't kill me when he was teaching me to drive, although it was a close call for both of us.

My Dad didn't kill me two weeks after I got my driver's license when I had a fender bender that cost \$235 to repair, big money back then.

My Dad still made sure I had a car and a gas credit card despite my being a kid and despite my driving ability. Maybe he was trying to kill me then?

My Dad accidentally let my bats out of the refrigerator when he was too tired in middle the night to notice they were loose. He didn't kill me then, and I am pretty sure he only thought about it until I had caught all the bats and put them back.

My Dad took me to all the science fairs with my bat projects and stood there bored for hours and sometimes days until I won them; after which he was always very happy and clapped loudly that all that standing around was done for another year.

My Dad didn't kill me when he woke up in the middle of the night to find half the police force investigating where we got all those materials stashed in our garage to build the homecoming float.

My Dad also didn't even yell at me in front of all the neighbors who had also been woken up and were standing around our yard, watching that police investigation and all the flashing lights and excitement.

My dad stopped smoking for us, even though he didn't really want to and was always upset because we kept smashing all his cigarettes.

When I was a lot older than when Dad taught me to tie my shoes, my Dad taught me how to tie a tie and by example how to dress sharp for other people who knew how to tie their ties. I was not as confused as I used to be.

My Dad taught me by example how to work hard.

My Dad always made sure we had a roof over our heads and food on the table.

My dad would take the table scraps or the worst pieces of meat off the plate so we could have the most or the best portions.

My Dad was glad I went to college and proud that I made good grades and honor rolls.

My Dad didn't kill me when I didn't quite finish college even though I know he was disappointed.

When I was too big to jump off chairs anymore and wrap my arms around him, my Dad taught me that as a grown man it was okay to hug another grown man and show my emotions and we would often tell each other that we loved each other.

Through my entire life, no matter how tempting, my Dad didn't strangle me all those times when I deserved it, and there were plenty times I did.....I didn't deserve to be so lucky.

My Dad was also proud of me lots of times for lots of different things, and those times when I could make him proud of me made those moments of my life even prouder.

And my Dad, just like in a marriage, took care of me in sickness and in health, stood by me or better or worse, for richer or poorer, no matter how stupid I was acting or no matter how smart I was being.....

.....and now death has parted us, but I live each and every day a better person because of him.

I'll never forget my Dad.