

HoLe Holiday News 2006

What Happened to Ken?

Major life changes

After many years of sending yearly newsletters, you are probably wondering what happened with no Hodor yearly news for 3 years...no your subscription did not run out. The editor and news crew were busy with major life challenges.

To give you a brief synopsis:

- *Three year long divorce—Ugh!
- *Moved 4-times—both ☺ and ☹
- *Met an incredible woman—Yeah!
- *Dealt with a number of deaths--☹
- *Travels—where's Ken now??
- *Kitchen remodel—beautiful!

A three-year long divorce process afforded him time to enjoy many aspects of life not available during marriage and hone his skills. He enjoyed dating, living in some of the most beautiful places on Earth, learning various investment strategies and exploring secrets to vitality. Truism:

“Love is grand; divorce is a hundred grand.”

After living in the same house for 35 years he moved 4 times in just 3 years. Ever since bicy-

cling across the US, he learned how little is really required to enjoy life. So he put all of his essentials into his van and moved. Although this kept moving relatively simple, it was repeated 4 times. For years he fanaticized about living in quaint little La Jolla, CA on the ocean. He finally got his wish and now lives there.

During his dating period, being very analytical and applying his computer skills, he searched the Internet using various dating service websites. After creating a search profile, he searched over 5 million women with zero matches. Bummer! So he decided to be less picky and started cutting down his criteria to only the essentials (intelligent, non-smoker, non-drinker, healthy lifestyle, etc.) and found 20 women. He enjoyed dating a few of them. Then by chance, he met a beautiful intelligent woman in Chicago, Midway airport reading a health magazine waiting for a plane. To make a long story short and fit into this simple newsletter...Shell not only met the trimmed down criteria, she also met ALL his original criteria plus many more he did not even know were possible. WOW! ...what a woman!

For those of you that remember the bike project from previous newsletters, it has been in a holding pattern while he dealt with all the other challenges thrown at him. Stay tuned...

Remodeling

Ken grew up learning how to remodel and build practically anything from his Dad. This past couple of years he passed on some of this knowledge to Jenny and Kelley with some plumbing projects on their homes.

Kelley learned how to install a super flusher toilet and repair a leaky bar sink. In addition she also enjoyed the opportunity to learn how to repair her bedroom ceiling just below the sink. Since she was on a roll with plumbing she also decided to remodel

her guest bathroom with new tile and update the plumbing.

Jenny also put her team of remodelers together and redid her guest bathroom in addition to updating some of the old plumbing in the rest of her house.

Most recently Ken and his trusty right hand woman, Shell, remodeled the kitchen guest house. You can see the dramatic before and after pictures at the website:

www.geocities.com/kenhodor/kitchenremodel

Life Mentors

Reflections...what have you learned?

It is great to have older mentors in life. Ken has been fortunate to have many. They each added tremendous value to his life. Both his Uncle George and Mom passed away this year. He learned a lot from them.

From his Mom, he learned how to maintain a clean and orderly house and enjoy a frugal lifestyle.

Ken grew up in a relatively frugal family. From his parents he learned what was truly valuable in life—good health—and how little it costs to enjoy it. He finally found out how little he spends—not including rent <\$5,000 per year—the same as his Dad. So it looks like he can continue to enjoy his early retirement indefinitely.

This past year was especially fun at tax time because he did not have to pay any taxes or even fill out a tax return—another life simplification. This year will be another story. Since the divorce was finalized, he went back to trading stocks. You will be happy to know Ken will be making his contribution to the Federal and State governments this year.

Ken's Uncle George was always doing things for others without expectation of anything in return. He thrived on the appreciation and bewilderment people expressed from his kindness. The media started picking up on this with the phrase "pay it forward."

Successful people are always looking for opportunities to help others.

Unsuccessful people are always asking, 'What's in it for me?'

--Brian Tracy

The secrets to longevity with vitality

Ken has a 92-year old friend Jack Flanagan (also known as Jack La Lanne of Key Biscayne) who is in incredible physical shape. He showed Ken how to exercise and eat a very healthy diet. Ken would follow behind him at the salad bars to learn what foods worked well and which did not.

Ken has known Jack for almost 10 years. He has been a quite an inspiration. Ken asked him "What is going on?...I always heard that as you get older you are supposed to be less physically fit with aches and pains with poorer mental functions. I am feeling better and thinking clearer at 56-years old than I did when I was 30." Jack just smiled knowingly and said

"Age is an excuse, not a reason."

"Because of all you have learned and the changes you've made to your lifestyle, you have come to the state of homeostasis...It keeps getting better." ☺

Jack also offered him words of wisdom when looking for a life partner. He said to find someone with

"similar interests and complementary assets"

Very sage advice. Ken originally thought, opposites attract. Boy! was that stupid.

Shell and Ken's landlady is a grandmother and very fit mentally and physically. She won't tell them her age. So it is hard to judge—she is so full of vitality. She claims her passion for dance keeps her young. You would be hard pressed to find youngsters in their 30's that could keep up with her. She just successfully completed an extensive real estate test to renew her real estate license. Very impressive!

Ken says: I plan on living forever. So far, so good.

Travels

Where's Ken now?

For the past 3-years Ken traveled extensively due to dating and helping other people. Many times he awoke not knowing exactly where he was. He flew to the Midwest every month or two to see his Mom, Uncle and his girlfriend (Shell).

Jim (Ken's brother) and Ken repeatedly tried to get their Mom to move to California near them. However, she would not move. Now you know which

side of the family his stubbornness came from.

He and his grade school buddy John initiated a 40-year grade school reunion. This group stuck together for 9-straight years and built friendships much stronger than during high school or college. Everyone came together from around the country and shared their experiences. Some of the classmates continue to refine their talents and put on a great show for their classmates. There were comedians, musicians, singers and story tellers.

Shell (Michelle Lema)

So who is Shell you might ask? She is a farm girl from Iowa who worked in her Dad's service station, now with a degree in finance that works for various Stock Brokerage houses—such as Merrill Lynch, and Smith Barney.

Since she lived in Davenport, Iowa and Ken lived in Santa Cruz, California, they learned about each other through extensive use of the telephone and some very romantic emails for more than a year of dating. When Ken traveled to the Midwest to help his Mom and Uncle, he would always drop by to visit Shell.

She grew up around animals—dogs, turtles, fish, cats, and a horse. So going to visit the animals at the zoo is one of her favorite outings. Ken and Shell have memberships at the local San Diego Zoo.

Ken always dreamed of living in La Jolla, California. While Shell really wanted to move to a warmer and milder climate but never considered California. So they decided to give it a try and moved to La Jolla. It was a dream come true for both of them. After moving from one noisy apartment to another they finally located a guest house in a quiet neighborhood with an ocean view just a block from the ocean. Shell now walks to work and avoids the Southern California traffic.

Since Shell sold her car in the Midwest she needed another vehicle. Searching the Internet she found a beautifully maintained Lexus LS 400. This turned out to be Ken's dream luxury sedan he planned on buying once his finances allowed. So yet another dream come true. Life is really...really good.

Michelle and Ken both enjoy a healthy lifestyle, working out, bicycling, swimming, hiking, golf and archery. Michelle encourages Ken to experience Yoga while Ken encourages Shell to enjoying more water sports—scuba and skin diving.

They found they even have the same Myer's Briggs personality type—ENTJ...What a pleasure enjoying someone with a similar personality style.

The only difference they found growing up was while he was building projects; Shell and her sisters enjoyed their Barbies. Maybe this is the reason she enjoys their relationship...she has her own Ken to play with ☺ Could this be the complementary assets Ken's buddy Jack suggested for a great relationship. It continues to work well.

Living with an Engineer

Shell has never been around Engineers before. So to give her an idea of what Engineers are about Ken shared with her a little story:

Two engineering students were walking across campus when one said,

"Where did you get such a great bike?" The second engineer replied,

"Well, I was walking along yesterday minding my own business when a beautiful woman rode up on this bike. She threw the bike to the ground, took off all her clothes and said, "Take what you want."

The second engineer nodded approvingly, "Good choice; the clothes probably wouldn't have fit."

She now has many other stories of her own to tell.

Vacationing

Michelle treasures her very limited vacation time. So she plans ahead at least a year in advance and must be very diligent evaluating her priorities. This year she and Ken visited her Brother David's family in Tennessee for a high school graduation.

While at Merrill Lynch she developed quite a number of friendships among her clients. Florida to visit an old friend.

Her oldest sister Terry celebrated one of those big number birthdays—we wouldn't want to say which one. So Shell put on a massive birthday celebration in the Midwest with a tropical theme. She spent weeks making all the preparations long distance. The party went off with out a hitch and everyone had a great time with a number of requests for her creative multimedia presentation—maybe this is her true calling.

Finally after all their hard work relocating to California Ken and Shell finally enjoyed a true vacation they called the Tour de California. But again they only had time for the highlights. So they sipped wine in Napa Valley, camped out in Yosemite, experienced the movies-behind the scenes at Universal Studios and sampled many great restaurants along the way.

It's not how much money you make, it is how much joy is in your life. --Unknown

Both Shell and Ken are experiencing joy like never before. They hope all reading this experience the same feelings.

Jenny

Home owner

Jenny bought her parents house in Sunnyvale, CA where she lived growing up. She has made it her own by planting a wonderful garden. However, her green thumb was still wanting for more so she and her good friend Thomas planted a vegetable garden at the local community garden area.

Jenny and Ken enjoyed a “father-daughter” road trip this year from Hammond, Indiana to Sunnyvale, California. Growing up Jenny and Kelley had many memories visiting Grandma and Grandpa. Since Ken’s Mom was in a nursing home, they decided to remove items that had special memories and take them back to California for their homes. On their cross country voyage they also visited Mt. Rushmore, Yellowstone, The Badlands, The Great Salt Lake and even the famous Wall Drug Store in South Dakota.

She out grew her last company and changed jobs to a new startup company this year. The new company is another biotech company involving catheters we may all need at some point in our lives. She caught the exciting startup bug.

One of her latest creative interests is “throwing pots.” No not at anyone but taking clay and forming them into bowls, pots and vases. It keeps those creative hands busy.

Jenny’s very nimble fingers also get a workout with another hobby—making jewelry.

Next we hope she creates a website to display her creative side.

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Kelley

Traveler

Kelley continues to work at HP and now manages an Engineering team in India, where she travels regularly. While there, she loves visiting a different state on each trip.

Once Dad and Jenny moved all the Grandparent’s furnishings to Northern California, it was up to Kelley to figure out a way to get them to Southern California. So she and a friend enjoyed a long weekend road trip hefting furniture into a U-Haul moving truck.

One of her latest interests is blowing glass. She started small making paper weights and is now getting into vases and bowls.

<http://www.geocities.com/kenhodor/aboutme>

Then click on the “youngest daughter” link.

Kelley continues to explore her limits and test her physical skills with rock climbing. If you follow the above link you will also see her doing her thing on the side of a piece of granite.

By the way, contracting Hodor and Lema (last names) they came up with HoLe and pronounced “holy” for the holidays.

Shell and Ken are both very excited about 2007. With all these major life changes behind them, 2007 looks like a really GREAT year for the HoLe’s.

At first, dreams seem impossible, then improbable, and eventually inevitable.

--Christopher Reeve

We wish you well