

One Out of Line: A Wisconsin Farm Boy's March Through Life

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The second oldest in a family of ten children tells his story of growing up on a Wisconsin dairy farm during the great depression years (late 1920s through early 1940s); and his follow-on career in the United States Marine Corps. The family home in his early years, on Summit Ridge, had changed little from those found there in the late 1800s. No electricity, no central heat, no inside plumbing; and a dearth of other conveniences generally available at the time. In so many ways, a twentieth century family, living in a nineteenth century world. If these were hard economic times, all was softened by the warm embrace of family, a one-room school, and the Catholic Church; the three pillars around which life revolved. Then too, there was the active flirtation with nature as children interacted with rhythm of the four seasons, and the resulting kaleidoscope of events and activities occurring on a dairy farm. When in his late teens, life beyond the farm beckoned. He rejected his pious Catholic mother's less than subtle encouragement over the years to become a priest, and chose as his vehicle to escape the farm, enlistment in the United States Marine Corps. His subsequent twenty-seven years of military service was highlighted, by serving with an infantry battalion in the winter of 1950 battle at the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea; and a more peaceful tour of three years at the presidential Mountain Retreat, Camp David, Maryland. Marriage to the "girl next door" and four children also form part of the scenario, as does current blissful retirement in the San Diego area in Southern California.

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