

# Procrastinated Love

In February I learned of a writing contest, to write a love story. My initial thoughts were to compose a story of two people meeting and falling in love.

I began.

On a beautiful summer's day in June in late August of 1976, it was not uncommon to climb onto my bike and head out. The bike was a 73 Honda 360CB and she had a custom starburst paint job.

The only question now was, Where to go?

I could ride up US61/67 to St. Louis, or stay local and just enjoy the sun and wind.

Before joining the Navy I would just spend the day at the pool. That's a great idea, go to the pool and see if any of my old friends happen to be there.

I kicked her over and strapped on the helmet. Down the back sidewalk to the alley I rode, turned right and up the hill. Jefferson to 11<sup>th</sup> street then to Virginia and follow it to the park. Up the hill and around the turn to find the pool, busy as usual.

I parked in the circle drive and walked to the fence, scanning for any familiar faces. The water looked clear and clean as always. The kids splashed and played in the shallow end and the Lifeguards watched and blew their whistles to keep the peace. That was my job just a few years ago.

I made my way around the fence, stopping to talk to a friend here, and another there finally arriving at the concession counter. I could use a coke I thought.

I waited in the line for my turn and as I stepped up to order, I heard her ask, "What can I get you today?"

"I'd like a Coke please" I replied as I noticed her deep green eyes and the dark brown hair highlighting her very cute face. I knew this girl. She was the little girl that lived up the street

from my Dad's house. She's not so little any more.

We talked a while, but others were waiting for service. She looked at me and said, "Some of us are going bowling tonight, would you want to join us?" "We'll be at Quonset about 6 tonight." "I'd like that." I said as I moved out of the way.

As I read the story back I found it was not about love.

Next, I started to tell about that first bowling date, and how they talked all night without bowling a game. But that is not love either.

Maybe I can tell about how she graduated on a Friday, they got married on Saturday morning and started a new life together on Sunday. No, that's not love either.

Seventeen years of military life together, three children, her having to raise the children alone while he went on long deployments. No, still not what love is.

Travelling together, vacations with kids and grandkids. Shared family times and family losses, still did not tell the story of love.

How can I explain love? Love is all of these things together with countless other tales, some private some personal and some shared with the world. My love story is ongoing and I will remain thankful that our story is still being written.

It is now near the end of March. The deadline is approaching, and the story is begun.