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Alan S. Morrisson

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## MY FRIEND/MY MENTOR

Alan S. Morrison\*

I returned to the School of Law in 1966 as a newly-minted Assistant Professor and, by all accounts, was full of the misplaced self-confidence that afflicts many in that position. Now I would be in a position to fling questions at students when just a few years earlier I had been the target. Most of the faces on the faculty were familiar ones, but there was this new fellow, Al Meyer, who had joined since my graduation.

In those days, Al, Lou Bartelt, and I were often found at the office in the evening, preparing for the next day's classes. They would graciously invite me to join them at the Old Style Inn for a few beverages and some conversation at the end of the evening. It was there that Al began his lifelong interrogation of me and my ideas. Whoa! I thought that was supposed to end when I received my treasured diploma. But Al was relentless in his efforts to make me think through my own ideas and opinions and it was the beginning of a friendship of more than forty years.

In that first year of my teaching career, Al asked me to join him at the annual meeting of the American Association of Law Schools that was held that year in Washington D.C. Little did I know that traveling with him in his auto with a sack of bologna sandwiches prepared by my wife would give him a chance to cross-examine me for over 1500 miles. I wasn't sure that I knew anything for sure when I returned; I was exhausted from the effort to explain and justify just about everything that I had uttered.

Our friendship traveled well. We visited Florida, where he and his wife Nancy had a retreat, in St. Louis where I moved in the mid-eighties, in Valparaiso on our frequent trips there, and in Palm Desert California where he retired for a few years before eventually returning to Valpo. I once suggested that there be an audit of the Law School books because I wasn't sure how a dean who had spent all of his career at our school could afford a home in the land of the wealthy. On one of our trips to Palm Desert, someone took a candid photo of the two of us on a bench in a high-priced shopping area while our wives stretched the limits of our credit cards. The photo shows us in our golf garb and staring vacantly into the distance. Al sent me a copy of that photo with the observation that "somewhere two villages were missing their idiots."

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\* Professor of Law, Distinguished Practitioner in Residence, Valparaiso University School of Law.

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In 1987, I was privileged to be asked to deliver the commencement address at the first ceremony that was separately held for graduates of the Law School. I stayed with Al and Nancy and showed him an advance copy of my address. I waited expectantly for his statement of appreciation of my masterpiece. After a few minutes he said, "I liked the part about the submarine." He was referring to a metaphor I had attempted about the sound of the siren of a diving submarine and how it would bring people up short. But not a word about the rest. I realized that Al was once more being the teacher that he had so successfully been his entire professional life.

As Dean Bruce Berner observed in his remarks at Al's memorial service, Al's willingness to question—and question yet again—was a sign of his affection. He simply wanted everyone to make the same effort that he did in shaping his ideas and positions.

The School of Law is a monument to Al's untiring efforts to mold it into a modern, respected institution. This very publication is a tribute to the foresight and energy that motivated Al to push a very talented group of students to create it out of almost nothing. With precious few physical assets and almost no budget, Al persevered, and we are now the beneficiaries of the respected journal and his vision.

As we all know, nothing is forever, but it is still hard for me to think that I will no longer have the joy of Al's presence. Forty-one years just wasn't enough.