

A letter from William DeMayo

Written in 2004, updated January 2014

As I look back over my 93 years, I realize that my charmed life is a testament to sharing and the happiness it brings.

When I completed my tour of duty as a bombardier in WWII, the United States government made it possible for me to obtain my college degree through the G.I. Bill. This remains one of our country's most inspired gifts ever offered to war veterans, and it has enriched us both immeasurably.

Working as an estate planner I began to understand how parents could provide financial gifts to their children and then disperse those gifts during their lifetimes. In this way, parents could enable their children to obtain the benefits of their future inheritance, and live to see and experience how their gifts are used and cultivated.

I decided to practice what I was preaching. Through the years, Stella and I made annual contributions to our daughters' securities account. In 1998, we, as a family, decided to sell our securities in order to purchase a 300 acre ranch in south-central California. This ranch serves the aims and purposes of our entire family.

The ranch was the answer to Neda's lifelong dream to create a wild horse sanctuary that she now operates and calls "Return to Freedom" (website- www.returntofreedom.com). Stella and I enjoy our retirement home on the property. Our daughter Diana enjoys the ranch as a vacation retreat where she brings her young son and her husband to commune with nature and with us.

At Return to Freedom we share our home and lives with our children, our grandson and with over 300 wild mustangs that might otherwise have been abandoned, abused or slaughtered. Our days are enriched by the volunteers, educators and visitors who come to enjoy and learn about these beautiful animals. We delight in the children that come to participate in the numerous youth programs that are conducted each year. And we take great pride in the model sanctuary that Neda has created where wild horses are saved while keeping their herd bands in tact, that they may enjoy their family as God intended.

My life is fuller and richer by virtue of what I have shared. And I take immense pride as I watch my daughters share their gifts with others.

Yes, my life is charmed, indeed.