

“THE GANG” is

ALL HERE

Larry Leon Richman

I have known Larry for 45 years now—incredible, isn't it, to think all the growing up together we have done. We were just 15 year old kids when we first met and connected right off forming a very tight gang of high school friends that hang close to this day! We are all turning 60 years old—who would have imagined. 60 is OLD!!! I actually don't think that way so much anymore!

I will forever appreciate your friendship during my dating years, the long talks, crazy hikes up Cathy's foothills, floating down the canal with dead livestock, playing in the yucky irrigation water in our North Pasture and driving through the Rose Hill cemetery so late at night that a cop stopped us (remember your response when he asked why we were at the cemetery? "Nothing better to do.") We are so lucky we weren't arrested! We had parties every Saturday night before and/or after the Saturday night dance—usually down in your 5111 Mountain View Drive basement! Remember skipping school even—you guys lived so close we could get away with it! The lib, the book drops, the photo lab, working on the yearbook, choir, Bother Vevig, the dam tour... this list could go on forever. Meeting you was such a turning point in my life in so many ways. I just remembered all the Stake stuff—June conference, dance practices and festivals with Vinette Southwick, firesides, LaRae Carter, our amazing stake youth leaders including Lynn and Betty/Mary! Ha ha!

Then came time for serious life—graduation, college, missions and all. BYU that first year was amazing because of you and our wonderful group—you and David and Bob, specifically. Going to the plays and movies and dances and firesides and devotionals—meeting at Portal F, for Flake, of course.

Then the mission calls started coming. Oh man, we had no idea what that would bring. David off to Hong Kong. Remember when you and I took your twins out to Beals after David left. Then you left too. It was so great exchanging letters and later while I was in Israel and you were in Guatemala. I remember being so terribly worried about you during that devastating earthquake of 1976 that killed 26,000 people, right in the area where you were serving. It was so relieving when we found out that you were okay, but so many, many wonderful people had lost their lives. I think you spent the remainder of your mission helping them recover from the devastation. Who would have guessed that your mission experience would lead you to such an illustrious career with the church, translating at first, linguistics and then more and more.

We enjoyed some great times after the missions as well. Remember the Stupid Lecture Series and "seet down, Julio!" Joyce's Grandparents' apartment, us lining you up with whoever we could! So soon after David's mission, we married (10 months) and you were there with us in Provo Temple. You took up with Bryan, my brother at that point and had some extremely crazy adventures. It was a happy day, finally.....when you found Teri!! She is perfect in every way for you. I remember coming to Idaho Falls, meeting her family and witnessing your wedding.

We have had great times with you guys. Remember the fun camping trip we took together. I think it was up Weber Canyon somewhere. We both had a passel of little kids. Even though our families have kept us busy and involved in our own wards, etc. we have managed to sneak a dinner in now and then or even a

rare Gang Party, making Jim and Deanne come from Evanston, David and Cathy from Logan, Bob and Jeanie from Boise, you guys from West Valley and us from Layton. We all sort of bloomed where we were planted and stayed in our own neck of the woods for a long time. It is such a sweet thing to remember the closeness we have felt over the years and knowing that even though we may not see each other often, we are just a phone call away and instantly have that perfect connection, no matter how long it has been.

You and Teri have raised a beautiful family, served faithfully in every possible calling and continue to bless the lives of everyone around you. Good grief you have a ton of grandkids! We need to know them and all those in-law people. I guess it is only natural that we now have amazing big families and can just get a glimpse into that part of each other's lives from some distance. Well, the Internet makes it much more possible to keep track of what is happening, thank goodness!

We love you guys and wish you the happiest birthday!!

Claudia Kay Flake Beal

Dear Jamie,

I have a dozen excuses for not writing something sooner (caring for my 97 year old Mother, her Birthday Celebration with over 100, arrival of our kids & grandkids from Singapore, running around like a headless chicken in preparation for our 38 coming for our Reunion in a week, husband being called as Bishop yet AGAIN, etc., etc.) but they are all just that...Excuses! ~

I cannot hear or read the name of Larry Richman without evoking images of "Our Gang" of friends growing up/going through the joys and pains of High School in Boise, Idaho in the early 1970's. Memories of Seminary, Saturday Night Dances, Gang Get-Togethers (better known as Dares), Floating the Boise River, Picnics in the Flakes' Cow Pasture, Spiritual Feasts as we held gang scripture studies in the home of Bishop Laney before going to Dances our Senior Year and Tearful Singings of "God Be With You Till We Meet Again" as each one of our dear boys said their last good-byes the night before driving to the LTM (the Language Training Center and precursor to the MTC) in Provo, Utah to begin their Missions.

Those partings were painful because somehow we knew, deep in our hearts that it would never be the same again, that life would take us all to different places and experiences. But we moved forward with confidence that our beliefs and friendships were built upon true and lasting principles which had become an integral part of our core being and would carry us through life, eventually allowing us opportunities to briefly interact and touch base as our paths have crossed from time to time.

I'm not really sure when the first time I met or became aware of Larry was, but it seems to have been somewhere in the middle of my Sophomore year in High School and connected to my friendship with Claudia Flake, who had a crush on David Beal, who had a couple of friends -- Bob Peck and Larry Richman... (I thought for years that his last name was Richmond...still have to catch myself from saying that)! What a delightful, fun, congenial group of friends! I especially remember how quick witted Larry and David were, as they played off each other like a pair of comedians, keeping the rest of us in constant stitches! Mirthful laughter pours down through the years into my mind even now as I think about them!

Others joined "the Gang" (Claudia's cousin Jim and his various girlfriends as well as Kaylee Neal who was as sweet on Larry as I was on Bob) and we enjoyed numerous Church centered activitieswe were such GOOD kids (not to be confused with the rough, violent gangs of today)! It was not an exclusive group, it was rather an inclusive group and we welcomed any who gravitated our way!

One of my favorite memories of you Larry, was the day we had all decided to have a fun picnic at Claudia's (it seems like it was before or after floating the canal/river with innertubes) and it was a bit difficult to find a dry spot in the pasture due to recent flood irrigation. We finally settled on a spot and spread out the picnic blanket and food and then SOMEONE leaned back on their elbow placing it smack dab into a mostly dried "cow pie"! The rest of us began laughing our heads off, which lead to said cow chip being flung at someone and numerous references to "who flung dung?" ~ ~ ~ One thing led to another and soon we were all involved in a full out Cow-Pie Fight, chasing each other through muddy puddles from one end of the pasture to the other till finally you were the only one left unscathed and we began to back you into a corner near the fence. You ran left and right but as soon as you realized you were completely surrounded by us, you threw your hands up into the air (indicating a surrender) and demanded that we stop! At this point you stunned, surprised and shocked us all by climbing to the top of the fence and voluntarily diving head first into a foot deep, ten foot wide puddle of muddy, manure water and came up laughing as hard as the rest of us! It was one of your finest moments!!! ~ We all laughed till we cried! To this day I am amazed that none of us came down with dysentery or some other dreaded disease from exposure to all that muck! Ahhh, the memories!

Larry, you have always been so dedicated and meticulous in every aspect of living and serving in the gospel....it was no surprise that with your bright mind and keen intellect you caught on quickly to the dialects encountered on your mission and later used your newly gained language skills to help translate the Book of Mormon into...(fill in proper name here)....a language involving intricate clickings of the tongue, that I can neither spell nor pronounce the name of!) and after being the chief editor of our Gang Newspaper (WHO comes up with an idea like that!?), it was little surprise that you would end up working for the Church (fill in correct name of department here ~)....forgive me Larry, some of us are not aging as

gracefully as others of us and my words are leaving me bereft and confused of late!

Likewise, it was no surprise that you would find a wonderful woman, equal to you in every way to share the rest of your life with and to be your partner in parenting! Teri has always been kind, friendly and welcoming whenever we've had a chance to visit and her Enchilada Recipe is still one of our favorites! We love to hear about your family each year in your Christmas Letters and I am motivated to figure out Facebook (I'm sooo non-techie) so we can keep up to date on what's happening in your lives! It's evident that you have raised a fabulous family just by the fact that they wanted to make your 60th Birthday such a Special Celebration!

In closing, (sounds like a talk at Church, eh?) I just want to Thank You for Being Born and for being the good, valiant, energetic, joyful individual and friend from my youth that you have been!

Happy 60th Birthday Dear Larry!

Love Ya,
Cathy (Ellsworth) Bush

At the time I knew Larry I was quite a backward kid. We happened by chance in our High School days to become members of the same gang. Being members of the same gang is not as bad as it sounds, (no secret Combination or anything like that). However we were known to go on "Dares" and other dangerous activities of that sort. I remember staying up all night with the gang eating baby food and other things of that sort. I think some of us had a "Blue Berry Buckle" Hang-over in the morning. That was a bad way to start out a new year.

On a serious note the things that impress me the most about Larry inspired me in my own life. Since I was such a backward kid at the time, I was often intimidated by most people whether friend or foe. Larry always was nice to me, though in my mind I was a Cipher. One thing that had a very lasting impression on me was when Larry's Mother died. What impressed me was that Larry was so positive about the whole thing not wanting to bring others down because of his loss. His behavior in this circumstance helps me look at death in a different way. I think in some way this helped me prepare for experiences in my future. Also Larry always put the Gospel first in his life. I was particularly impressed with Larry's Story about Guatemala and the Earthquake. Larry is very smart and I admire all the things he has done working for the Church. I give you my Best Wishes on your big day!

Your Friend, Jim Flake

I think the first time I met Larry was in a troop preparing to go to the National Scout Jamboree in 1969. He was already an Eagle Scout! We later were in the same ward, the same seminary class the same high school. In high school we were part of a group of friends we called "the gang". Larry always had a sharp wit. He could make you laugh at the oddest things. He did this before Jerry Seinfeld even had the idea. He must have a gift for language, learning not only Spanish on his mission to Guatemala but also a Mayan dialect. We don't see each other much these past many years but I still consider Larry a good friend.

Best of luck to you, Larry and your family.

Bob Peck

I remember the fantastic trip Larry and I took right after I graduated from BYU while we were both still single. We did the Eastern Airlines Unlimited Mileage Challenge. We had 25 flights in 21 days. They said no one had done more destinations! We hit: Missouri to visit my Brother Lawrence, Mississippi to visit my brother Dennis, Washington DC to visit Larry's brother, Jeff, Albany NY to witness the baptism of Oliver (Flake) in the Susquehanna River on the site of Joseph and Oliver's baptism and ordination. We stopped over and stayed in Houston and Miami a night. I think it was in Miami where we swam in the pool and a couple of girls tried to pick us up. One of them dove into the pool and her top came off! We ran back to our room quickly! We had a great time in Mexico City visiting all the sites and pyramids, Guatemala visiting the mountain villages of Paticia and Potsun where Larry served, Puerto Rico, Cancun and the Isla de Mujeres for great snorkeling and more places I am sure I am forgetting! It was the trip of a lifetime and we came home tired and sunburned with a ton of great memories! I think the three weeks of flights cost us \$368 each total. I missed walking at my BYU graduation for the trip but it was well worth it. I still reflect on the incredible things we saw and did. Thanks for putting it all together, Larry.

I remember Larry was my Best Man at our wedding and travelled all the way to Stockton California to do his duties. He was a great friend. I felt a little bad getting hitched and leaving him alone and single and I seriously thought it might be forever but Teri had mercy on him and he followed my example very soon after. Teri has been great for him!

I remember getting off my mission to New Zealand in 1977 and going back to BYU, mid-year (January), and not knowing anyone very well and getting set up in an apartment with three other guys who all went to Guatemala on their missions and I did not know any of them except for Larry. I just knew him from his friendship with my sister Claudia and that he was a grade older than me at Capital High. I thought he and his friends at Capital were a little weird and I was not very excited to be moving into his apartment mid-year on my sister's recommendation. It started off a little bit strange but quickly became one of the best times of my life. Larry and I had a ton in common and became fast friends. We had such fun in that Sessions Apartment. We had lots of great parties and lots of great times there. Larry was a great roommate! Crazy to think that was 37 years ago!

I remember a night when we got a knock on the door of our apartment and no one was there so all of us ventured out onto the porch to see who was hiding in the bushes. Once we were all outside, 20 people with huge buckets of cold water jumped up and began drenching us with water! We all rushed inside and slammed the door! We shut it before our roommate, Greg

Martin, could get inside and he was pinned against the glass door while bucket after bucket of cold water was thrown on him. He just sloshed from side to side as they hit him time after time with the water and we could only watch him suffer as we held the door firmly shut and he pounded on the door and begged us to let him in!

A few nights later we got our revenge against the apartment of girls who had organized the attack. We filled a huge 30 gallon trash can full of water and then leaned it precariously against their apartment door and then knocked. When they opened the door, 30 gallons of water washed into their apartment! Sweet revenge!

I think it was the same apartment of girls who brought us a peace offering a few days later to stop the feud. It was a beautiful cake with thick icing. It looked so good and we were so excited to dig into it after dinner. When we cut into it, we found out it was a cardboard box that they had iced and there was no cake at all! I guess they got the last laugh!

For ward home evenings one apartment of guys would go to a different apartment of girls each week. We always told them we would do the lesson if they would do the treats. We always took a Book of Mormon Trivia game Larry had created and played it against the girls. We got great treats every week and only had to prepare one lesson for the whole year! We always won the trivia game since we played it every week and we looked amazingly smart and even spiritual! I think that is what won me my wife and probably Larry his!

We had a roommate we called Gravy. He was much less than clean in his personal hygiene. We kept a pretty clean apartment and whenever he left stuff around, we just gathered it up and gave it a mighty heave on to his bed. Food, books, clothes and all got tossed on his bed. I remember meeting him for the first time and he had what appeared to be a nasty disfiguring scar of wrinkled skin on his cheek. Come to find out, it was not a scar, it was his nose that had run and then the snot had dried and wrinkled his cheek. Larry will have to tell you about where Gravy found one of his pens after having slept with his books all night in his bed.

I remember Larry translating the Book of Mormon selections into Katchikel (sorry about the spelling). It was really amazing to see him at work in his little campus office doing something so important as bringing that incredible book into the language of a people who had never been able to read it before. That is about as close to the role and work of Joseph Smith had as anyone will ever get. What an incredible honor and legacy for Larry to be associated forever with that work!

I remember visiting those Katchikel people in their tiny little block homes in the mountains of Guatemala. It was plan to see that they loved Larry and he loved them. It was touching to see how much they loved him and wanted to give him what they could. We ate corn tortillas they flattened out on their thighs from green corn dough. They cooked it on a little wok type pan and had to keep moving it around and flipping it over since they had no oil to cook it with. They gave us a bag of coarse salt to rub on the tortillas, no filling of any kind. That was their simple dinner and they shared it with us because of the high regard they had for Larry. Larry walked me though the villages and showed me the homes that had been flattened by the Earthquake and told me who had died in each home. There were hardly any homes where no one had died. Many lost all the family but one or two. I think the Branch President lost his whole family. It was a powerful experience for me.

Thanks,

Bryan Flake

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