

# MEMORIAL DAY REMEMBRANCES

*I*t's Memorial Day. A beautiful one at that.

Now the oak leaves  
are in full leaf,  
the shadows on our deck  
are deep  
and large pots of magenta geraniums  
cheer me as I write.

The windows are open wide.

All the near-summer smells  
that I love so much  
waft through our house  
on gentle breezes.

This is the kind of day Bob and I would relish ... would  
comment upon hourly. He'd come in from the yard for ice  
water, a sandwich, just to touch base. "What a day!" he'd say.  
He's wearing the Levis with the hole in the knee and his Yale  
T shirt. He took off his hiking boots at the screen door as  
he's been spreading black dirt for future seeding in the back  
yard.

If there's a golf tournament or a Cubs game he's liable to eat  
his snack in front of the tube, just to catch a few holes, a few  
innings. But the yard calls him. He communes with nature in  
a nearly-holy manner.

He loads the tractor-mower trailer with another pile of black dirt. He rides the tractor-mower pulling the cart to the next strategic bare spot. He rakes the pile smooth preparing it perfectly for seed. He's up and down off that mower a million times all day, shoveling, riding, raking and then seeding.

Sometimes he takes a break by the fire pit, sits in an Adirondack chair, leans back, stares at the rich canopy of leaves above him and finally takes a brief snooze. I always envied his ability to recharge in 15 minute increments, ready for the next lawn challenge.

We travelled a lot, National Parks, foreign forays. Those times were spectacular, a privilege. I take nothing away from our road trips. But what I miss most is the sight of his lovely white head of hair as he relaxes by the fire pit and gazes at the blessing of the full-leafed oaks of summer. I am thankful to have few regrets. But one thing I wish that I had done more often is to have put down my "necessary" tasks and to have joined him in the other Adirondack chair. And before I sat down in that chair to have

touched His precious silver-white hair with my hand,  
kissed the top of his head and  
leaned down to kiss his lips.

Then, in the reverie of a simple, ordinary yet glorious near-summer day put aside all that I deemed "necessary" to just BE in his sweet presence. 