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The Abstract (more than 6 or 7 words)

Married 38 years – same person

Three kids and 5 grandkids - more ups than downs

Family practice 33 years in small rural community on the prairie – my home town

Cancer – multiple myeloma – now in remission for 3 years after high dose chemo and an autologous stem cell transplant - not cured

Medicare policy development - 4 + years on the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) - commission is an arm of Congress advising on Medicare policy - fascinating, challenging, tiring - frequent trips to DC

Retirement - not yet

The Expansion

Overall things are going well. Kathy still puts up with me – most of the time. Two of our 3 kids and all 5 grandkids are now back in Wessington Springs after living in a variety of places around the world. It seems like our “empty nest” looks more like a day care center these days. Our youngest (Carleton '01) is a senior resident in internal medicine at Hennepin Co Med Center in Minneapolis – says he'll be back in SD eventually but we haven't been given a date.

The cancer experience is a great teacher. I'm ashamed to say that I have learned many things that I did not learn in either med school or 30 yrs of practice. Why do we have to be beaten over the head to learn? The experts tell me the cancer will be back but for now I feel good.

The Medicare stuff is something I find very interesting (my family has judged that to be some kind of fairly serious character flaw). It is a huge and very complex program and one that is clearly vital to the country. In general I am optimistic but if we are really going to make the program sustainable we need to be willing to accept some change. With that I am confident that benefits can be protected and that the program will be around for all of us.

Retirement - ??? Not ready just yet.

