

Foreword

This is **not** a great biography. Just something for me if I forget as I get older and a resource for my descendants. It covers key moments in my life, so it includes explicit (sexy) material, but they're well marked.

Some pictures can be enlarged by clicking them (zoomable). Depending on your browser, videos and MS Word documents will be downloaded rather than displayed.

For brevity, some details have been relegated to footnotes, but they contain information of importance to those wanting a full understanding of this biography -- (e.g., that I was a D/F student as a child but went on to graduate *Summa Cum Laude* in Engineering and go to Caltech for my Master's).

Ernesto R. Martin

An Autobiography
Part 2

This simpler, web-based version lacks some parts

Chapter XI: Getting Settled in Miami

When I had lived in Miami after arriving from Cuba, I missed not having a boat. Now, I was set on having a house on the water. We made several house-hunting trips but we didn't like anything we saw. I did fall in love with the design and floor plan of a new house, but it wasn't on the water and was missing a couple of things I wanted (like a Library and a second floor). So I decided to do my own design, copying elements of the house I liked but adding the missing things, buy a lot on the water, and build my dream house there.

I found such a lot in a Coral Gables neighborhood called Cocoplum and, while I was settling in at Amtec, construction began. In 1988 we moved into 7911 Los Pinos Circle and then bought a boat -- see [larger picture of the house and floor plan](#).

By this time, I was well on my way to controlling the business. It helped that 2 or 3 years earlier I had put together the software system, so I knew the procedures well. I now put emphasis on getting to know the client base and figuring out how to grow the business. The latter point -- growing the business -- became easier when we hired a young guy who in a couple of years would revolutionize Amtec. As our growth took off, however, things were not well on the home front.

First, we lost a 15-year member of our family, our dog Rascal (shown in two pictures that appeared earlier). She had been given to us as a newborn puppy by friends at Comsat Labs, way back in 1973. A peaceful and sweet dog, she had moved with us to Europe, where one [anecdote is worth noting](#).

Second, Judy was unhappy in Miami. She had lived there as a teenager, in the 1950's, before all the Latin migration, when Miami was an anglo town, and she didn't like the Miami of 1987. At the stores all the chatter was in Spanish, she would complain, and some of the sales clerks hardly spoke English. Tico was friends with a delightful American couple and made efforts for us to get together with them, but Judy wouldn't have any of it. She didn't like them, she said. And I, having been exposed to Cuban culture by Carlos Deupi several years earlier, accelerated my immersion. On weekends I wanted to go eat Cuban food and then go somewhere to listen to salsa music. Judy refused or went grudgingly. It was not a recipe for happiness.



My Parents in 1989 with one of his paintings

And, to be candid, I was attracted to a couple of women. That was a bad sign. Soon after moving into the new house, I told her I wasn't happy and about my attraction to others. We tried to fix it, but within a year we had separated and headed for divorce. Regrettably, Charlie, who was 13 at the time, took it hard. It affected his studies and his relationship with me, who he blamed. We worked at it and, over a lengthy period of time, things improved.

Meantime, Amtec was thriving. The new hire, Rick Torres, learned the business quickly and in a few years steered us into whole jet engines, not just spare parts. My job then changed markedly. First, I now had the critical task of obtaining the substantially greater financing needed to buy engines; in time we would have a sizeable inventory of engines, some in stock ready for sale or lease and others on lease to airlines. In addition to heading the financial side, engines also entailed complex contracts and increased our exposure to litigation. I would negotiate and close the deals that Rick put together, both purchases, sales and leases, using long contracts with multiple exhibits (not unlike the contract to buy a

house). I also acted as inside counsel, directing matters of litigation. [Amtec's 1994 Annual Report](#) tells the story.

And I even kept my fingers in the satellite jar, with occasional requests to provide consulting on satellite matters. In one instance, I was hired by General Electric and spent a week reviewing their spacecraft business in Princeton with an eye towards improving it.

Chapter XII: Life Is Sweet

My personal life was also thriving, after the sadness of the divorce. I had a boat, which I used frequently, I met new people, I went to parties, and I dated. Two relationships are noteworthy. One was with a married woman, who separated from her husband for me, but the relationship never came to fruition and she returned to her husband. The other was with Inita Hoyos, who would become my wife in 1995, after giving me a most wonderful present: a daughter.

Inita, born in Cuba, worked as head of human resources for the Southeastern region of a national retail chain. She was about six years younger than me, had never been married and was a terrific dancer. We hit it off right away. Now I had a companion who enjoyed everything I did. Well, almost everything, since (despite the picture at right) she wasn't so keen about boating.

We had been together for about a year, when, in mid-1991, she told me she was pregnant, news which elated me. I love children and had always wanted to have more. While Judy supported our efforts to adopt twenty years earlier, I had been the driving force behind Charlie's adoption. And, in something that is not generally well known, Judy had gotten pregnant a couple of years after we adopted Charlie, but chose to terminate the pregnancy against my desires. Now, I was going to be a father again. And soon we learned that it would be a daughter.

Having had two failed marriages, I was happy for us to live together for a while. And on March 17, 1992, Lauren was born to two delighted parents.

Two other things happened within a year, one bad, one good. First, my Dad died. He had suffered from Parkinson's disease for roughly 15 years and it had taken a toll. It was sort of unexpected, because he went into the hospital with an intestinal blockage that did not



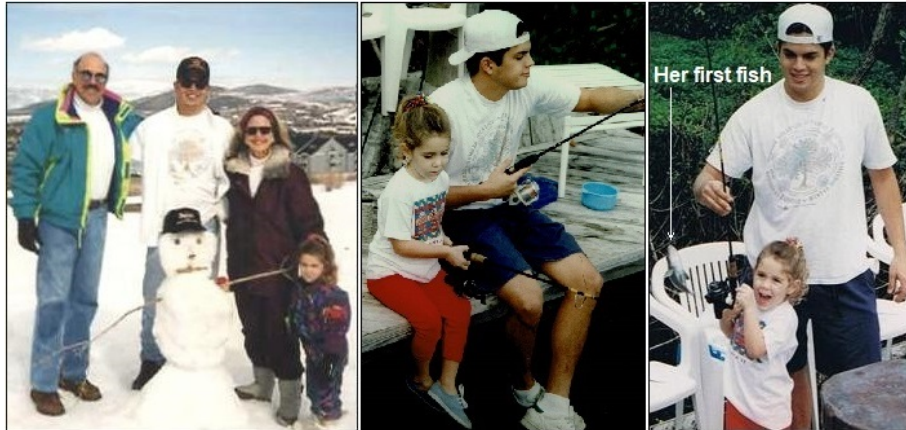
anecdote is worth noting.



appear life-threatening. But he died in the hospital one night. It darkened the happiness I was feeling with the gift of Lauren.

Second, we made friends with a group of several couples who, like Inita and me, loved to go out on weekends and have a good time. Anchoring this group was Felipe and OlgaMari Lorie. I had known Felipe from Miramar Yacht Club in Cuba but hadn't seen him in over 30 years, and I had met OlgaMari from my early years in Miami. Now, we re-connected and developed an inseparable friendship with them and the other couples that would last for years.

Aside from my Dad's death, everything was going well. Principally, of course, Lauren. What a pleasure, at this point in my life, to have a daughter. And the Company was thriving. Revenues, which had been \$8 million when I joined it, were now headed to \$36 million, better than what Tim Cook did at Apple, the legendary Jack Welch did at General Electric, and Cuban-born Roberto Goizueta did at Coca-Cola ([more](#)).



I had a huge income, a new Lexus LS400 and the 30-foot Scarab fast-boat with twin 200HP Yamahas ([larger picture](#)). Far more important were my kids. Charlie, a gifted athlete in football and especially lacrosse²³, had graduated from High School and was headed to college. Lauren was a beautiful blue-eyed girl, growing up rapidly and a pleasure to be with. Two short [anecdotes and a video](#) of that time, when Spanish was her main language, tell the story. Also, we had our group of friends who shared our love of travelling and good living. In 1994 and 1995, with my brother Dicky and cousin Rafi, we took the boat on trips to Bahamian islands, always coming back with a dark tan (see [picture](#)). And one of those islands would play an important part in my life (more on this later).

In 1995 Inita and I married on a trip to Casa de Campo and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, with both Charlie and Lauren there ([see a cute pic of Lauren on horseback](#)). We did it overseas and on purpose did not report it to U.S. consulate officials, so we could continue filing federal taxes as single under U.S. law, which was better than filing jointly.

As the Company's revenues increased, I felt in 1996 that this would be a good time to sell it. This was based on two things: my assessment that we were at or approaching a peak, with the possibility that FAA-mandated noise abatement requirements on jet engines might start crimping revenues and profits, and my desire to retire. Also, I was growing more concerned about the increased liability exposure associated with parts, engines and occasionally aircraft; despite the fact that we didn't do any repairs (our parts and engines were sent out for overhaul to FAA-certified facilities) and that we had favorable indemnification provisions in our engine sale and lease contracts, the worst-case scenario of a single claim could wipe out the company.

Frankly, I was tired. I owned about 17% of the Company, had other substantial assets, and felt that I could live reasonably well for the rest of my life if I managed what I had wisely. Tico and I discussed this subject, including whether my wanting to retire was clouding my view of the business, and both concluded that the time was right to sell the Company. Over the next year, we pursued the matter and, after some stumbling which affected my relationship with Tico²⁴, we signed an agreement in late 1997 to sell Amtec. The deal closed in early 1998.

Chapter XIII: Retired at 54 -- In Paradise

I served as a consultant to the buyers²⁵ for a few months, and then got on with enjoying life. Foremost among the enjoyment was Lauren, who was fully bilingual (in her first five years or so we had spoken to her only in Spanish). Inita was still working and often had to travel, so I spent a lot of time with her. I was, in essence, both a Dad and a second Mom. We watched TV together (not just cartoons and Sesame Street, but the newest episode of HBO's Band of Brothers every Sunday night), I started teaching her how to drive, and I would take her to a local mall to play with other kids in a carpeted play area.



In addition to enjoying Lauren, I did something I had wanted to do for most of my life: I learned to fly, became a pilot and bought a Cessna 337 twin-engine airplane. It helped that for over 15 years I had flown flight simulators. One of the highlights, after accumulating some experience, was a flight to visit Charlie in Idaho. Charlie had graduated from college in 1999, after losing his mom Judy to cancer in 1997 and, eschewing conventional jobs that would require commuting and suits, had become an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and a forest firefighter in Idaho, working April to October. The trip, in a small airplane, clear across the country, crossing the Rocky mountains, and landing on grass strips in mountainous terrain, was quite an adventure²⁶.

Between the flying, an occasional bit of software and business consulting, plus considerable travelling with the Lories and the other couples (principally to Europe) and with the family (principally skiing in Colorado and Utah), I was very busy. But taking care of Lauren and coaching her YMCA soccer teams (see [pictures](#) of the teams, including the one that won the Fall 2003 Under-12 girls Championship of the Miami-Dade YMCA) was my main and most enjoyable pursuit. I would pick her up from school every afternoon, and from there we would often go with her school friends to the park, where you'd see 8 kids, 7 moms and one dad.

And then I got even busier when I decided to buy a lot and build a house -- of my own design, of course -- on a remote Bahamian island.

My Bahamian interest had started a couple of years before selling Amtec. In the boating trips to the Bahamas that were mentioned earlier, I had taken the Scarab on a one-week boat tour of the Southern Bahamas in 1994 and of the Northern Bahamas in 1995, searching for the perfect



beach. In the 1995 trip I had visited [Great Harbour Cay](#), the largest in the Berry Islands chain. And there we found such beach ([picture](#)). I promised myself that if I ever came into some serious money, I would build a house on this beach.



In 2000, two years after selling Amtec, I started looking for a lot. Able to get there in one hour in my airplane, I looked at some properties and in late 2000 (not knowing that the NASDAQ bubble was about to burst) bought two adjoining beach-front lots near the northern end of the island, on what is known as Sugar Beach, and started construction²⁷. We first built the Tiki hut you see in the picture, and I often slept there, on a lounge chair with a cushion, on the frequent trips I made to the island to supervise construction. The house became habitable in mid 2002, and was completed in early 2003 ([description and more pictures](#)), ([video](#); depending on your browser, video may be downloaded rather than displayed).

Over the next few years, when Lauren was out of school, we would spend much of the summer there. By contrast, Charlie and I enjoyed the house in the winter, when Charlie had 4 - 5 months idle from his forest firefighting job, with him doing a lot of fishing around the island ([picture](#)). (And in one of those ironies of life, guess who has a house on the island, I see frequently and we've re-established our friendship? Mariate. Nearly 45 years later. She is perhaps the only one outside my family who still calls me "Ernestico".)



Between the house in Great Harbour in the summer and skiing in the winter, we had a ton of fun. And we put Lauren on skis early, at age 3 ([picture](#)).

One other notable event during this period was that Inita and I got married on December 15, 2001, at Little Flower in Coral Gables. As previously mentioned, we had gotten married in 1995 in the Dominican Republic, but now, with the 2001 wedding, we were also married under U.S. law and by the church.

In 2006 Lauren graduated from 8th grade at Saint Theresa School in Coral Gables, and it was noteworthy that she received the female Scholar-Athlete award. Imagine me -- an ex-football jock with a Master's from Caltech. I was ecstatic.

At the time this autobiography was initially written in early 2008, except for Lauren being in High School, not much had changed (a [collection of pictures spanning many years](#), including skiing, may

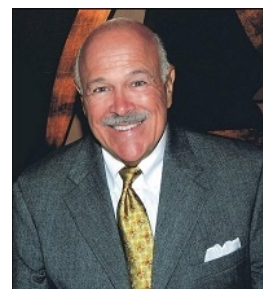
be seen [here](#)). I no longer coached her soccer team, because she played at school, but I'm now involved on matters dealing with my airplane²⁸. I continue doing a bit of consulting through my Delaware corporation, [ConsultResearch](#).

In 2008 we continued to go out with the Lories and the couples in our group most weekends and travel overseas with them very frequently, and most of that travel is ultra luxurious²⁹. In addition, we continued enjoying the Bahamas house every chance we got and tried to go skiing every year. And skiing had changed. I was always an advanced skier, but by now Charlie -- intrepid, fearless Charlie -- was better than me. And Lauren was now an intermediate skier, so it was a delight for us three to spend many days skiing together; here's a [2008 skiing video](#), and my narration is the only time in this Biography that you hear my voice (depending on your browser, video may be downloaded rather than displayed).

I continued living *la dolce vita*, and in late 2008 I did something I had wanted to do for several years: accompanied by Charlie, I went to Cuba, after 48 years. We were there a week and it was wonderful! In Havana, in addition to Old Havana and other tourist places, I went to the house where I was born, to the house where I lived when I left Cuba, and to the Miramar Yacht Club. We also took 1-day trips to Varadero, which has a lovely beach I used to visit as a child with my family, and to see the *mogotes* at Viñales ([2008 Cuba video](#); depending on your browser, video may be downloaded rather than displayed).

I also continued to do a bit of consulting, including a stint with a start-up which introduced a revolutionary new product the size of a flash drive which automatically backs-up a computer daily [and](#) will restart a crashed computer, whether it's because of a failed hard drive or a virus infection (watch me [being interviewed](#) at the 2009 Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas).

There were three noteworthy developments in 2010. First, after nine years, Charlie resigned from his forest firefighting job in Idaho and started looking for a fireman job in South Florida while taking courses to be certified as a paramedic; he had gone the prior year to the Miami-Dade Fire Academy to be certified as an urban fireman (where he became class leader and took the two top awards for Highest GPA and Best Overall, see [graduation video](#); depending on your browser, video may be downloaded rather than displayed). Second, Lauren turned 18 and graduated from High School with top honors (top 10 of her graduating



class, GPA of 4.8 and SAT of 1400, [see picture](#)), was accepted by many top-ranked colleges (e.g., Northwestern, Georgetown, Notre Dame), and chose to go to Vanderbilt to study pre-med. Third, we took our last trip with our group of friends and our weekend outings with them became less frequent, partly because Felipe ran into financial headwinds and because one of the couples in the group divorced.

In 2012 I sold my 30' fast-boat Scarab ([pictured earlier](#)) because with my airplane I now hardly used it; fortunately, I then got to use a friend's 29' [Intrepid](#) that was mostly moored in Great Harbour Cay. That year Charlie became a firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician with the Miami Beach Fire Department, where he won the highest award as the Outstanding Recruit of the team of new hires ([picture](#)). Soon thereafter he moved into his own place not far from our house. In 2014 Lauren graduated from Vanderbilt and Charlie, still in his firefighter gig, became a Paramedic. And I lost both engines of my airplane flying back from the Bahamas and did an emergency landing in the water ([see print news coverage](#) and [video news coverage](#)); the ditching was successful (none of the three occupants was injured) but I lost the airplane which was uninsured.



One sad note, however, is that early in 2014 I asked Inita for a divorce, after many years of *soledad* and unhappiness, and it became final in August. It's hard to tell why we grew apart, but perhaps Lauren's absence from the home and/or the less frequent outings with our group of friends played a part. After Inita and I separated, I started going out with Maggie Roche and we were soon inseparable; both subjects are covered in this [footnote](#)³⁰. In early 2015 I sold the Cocoplum house I had built 27 years earlier. Inita had moved to a 2BR/2BA condo in 2014 and I bought and moved into a similar condo when I sold the Cocoplum house. Lauren, who decided to take a year's break from school and has been working with a vascular surgeon in Miami, splits her time between her mom's place and mine. Oh, and I bought another Cessna 337 twin-engine airplane, a 1977 model to replace the 1973 model I had lost a year earlier in the ditching.

In a moment I'll cover some family things that have happened recently, but I wanted to touch upon the topic of wealth. I am quite well off and if you want to know how I did it, you can find out [here](#).

But enough about money. This autobiography was updated in mid-2019. In early 2016 I moved from my 2/2 condo into a 3/2 unit that I had owned for several years for investment, so Lauren and I could have more room. More room was also nice, because that year I adopted a Havanese dog who became my constant companion and slept in my bed every night. Then in mid-2018, I bought a 5BR/5BA house at 1124 Palermo Avenue in Coral Gables, and Maggie and I moved in together after a 2-month remodeling period to update the house; see more pictures [here](#), but click on them to enlarge them. We needed a backyard because my 3/2 condo was a bit small for our two dogs, Maggie's 80 lb Black Lab (Oreo) and my 20 lb Havanese (Rovi).

In September 2018 we went on a [trip to Italy](#) with my dear friend Carlos Deupi from the Washington area and his wife Jeannette. After an initial stop in Madrid, we arrived in Italy via Milan, rented an SUV, started our tour in the north at Lake Cuomo, drove for 2 weeks through much of Italy to Positano on the south (where the highlight was staying at the San Pietro Hotel), and flew out from Rome.

In October 2018 Maggie and my kids threw me a huge party for my 75th birthday that started with my favorite singer and ended with a Mariachi band. In each of the prior 3 years Maggie and I had [travelled to Europe in 2016 and 2017](#), gone skiing in Vail and Park City, and been often to the house in Great Harbour.



A development in 2019 is that I finally got a grandkid. Well, in a manner of speaking. You see, Maggie now has a granddaughter, Emma, and because Maggie's ex is seldom in the picture, I'm the grandfather. Emma and I have been close since she was born. She calls me Opa and adores me, in part because everyone else is over-protective and I give her freedom (see 49-second [video](#) of her at age 2 describing how I burned my finger). But little else has changed: Charlie now has a *macho* F150 truck and moved into a condo he bought, but he is still with the Miami Beach Fire Department as a firefighter and Paramedic; Lauren is still working with the vascular surgeon (I and others had been prodding her to go back to school, but that has abated somewhat because it's become apparent that she enjoys that job immensely); and my mom is still healthy at 98 years of age.

In April of 2019 Maggie and I went on a [River Cruise in Europe](#) with Carlos Deupi and Jeannette, which included 2 days in Paris at the start and 2 days in Prague at the end, and after that Maggie and I added 3 days in Budapest and 2 days back in Paris. And in June we went on an [Alaska Cruise](#) with Charlie, Kelly (Charlie's girlfriend), Lauren and 4 from Maggie's family, where the highlights were a boat tour to watch whales and a helicopter flight to explore a glacier.

In early 2020 we took a 1-week trip to Medellin, Colombia. Then the Covid-19 pandemic kept us quarantined at home, in part because of my mom, now 100 years old ([see a picture on her birthday](#) with me and Dicky). Not much happened that spring and early summer (I did sell the 4 vacant lots in the Ocala area and bought my 5th rental condominium). Then on July 30 the 2020 Corvette I had ordered in December arrived. If you've read the early part of this Biography, you know my intense involvement and love of sports and racing cars, which was largely relegated to the past when I went into the space business, started flying and built the Bahamas house. But when the Corvette was radically redesigned for 2020, with the engine in the middle and looking more like a Ferrari, I went for it. And when I said to Lauren that it was a mid-life crisis, she corrected me and said "more like a 4/5th-life crisis". And, in addition to having a lot of fun with the Corvette, and admiring glances everywhere I take it, it's turned out to be a profitable investment: in March 2021 it's worth around \$25,000 more than what I paid for it because the demand is so large and Chevrolet's factory stoppages have led to an 18 month waiting period for a new one, so buyers will pay a premium for a used one.



In late 2020 something happened which led me to decide soon afterwards to give up flying and sell my airplane. I had taken Lauren up for an instruction flight, had a minor problem with the rear engine, returned to the airport, misjudged speed and altitude and did a hard landing. Although a full test of the landing gear and other systems showed no damage, the incident made me realize that at 77 years of age and rusty

for not flying due to the pandemic, I was not the pilot I needed to be to fly my family, especially since virtually all of my flying was over water.



Zoomable

jumped at it.

In the Spring and Summer of 2021 we went on 2 trips to the Dominican Republic, one with friends Jorge and Iraida to the Samana area and one with Peter (Maggie's son), his wife Claire and her parents to the Punta Cana area. Sadly, we also learned that my friend Carlos Deupi had cancer and went to visit him several times in the Washington area.

In mid-2021 I officially gave up flying and put my Skymaster airplane up for sale; it sold several months later. (The response of the Skymaster community to my retirement may be seen [here](#)). But with my renewed interest in cars, I don't miss flying.

In October 2021 we went to Spain for 3 weeks. First 2 weeks with friends Jorge, Iraida, Frank and Lissette touring the south in a Mercedes van, then 2 days with Frank and Lissette in San Sebastian, then touring the north with just Maggie; pictures from that trip may be seen [here](#). Sadly, Jeannette called while on the Spain trip to say Carlos had died, and soon after returning from Spain we went to the Washington area to be with Jeannette for Carlos' funeral services. A parting gift from him of the 2 of us when we were bank robbers out west may be seen [here](#).

In February 2022 we all went to Park City. Historically we would go on a ski trip every year, but had not gone since 2018, partly because of the Covid pandemic. I chose not to ski -- one knee is giving me trouble and at 78 years of age I didn't want to risk injury -- so I kept Maggie company while others skied, but we all went sled riding and snowmobiling ([pictures here](#)).

In June 2022 I ordered a new 2023 Corvette and got it in September (after selling my 2020 in August for \$80,000, \$19,500 MORE than what I paid for it); I had seen a Corvette like my 2020 BUT in a darker metallic red color and with the entire interior (seats, dashboard and doors) in a natural/tan leather color, fell in love with it, and ordered it.



In October - November 2022 we went on a 12-day cruise from Athens to Barcelona with Jorge, Iraida, Frank and Lissette, then Maggie and I went to Istanbul on the way to 2 days in **Cappadocia to ride a balloon** and stay in a cave hotel. Pictures of the trip may be seen [here](#).

Then, right after Christmas 2022, Maggie and I flew to London, rented a car upon landing, spent 4 days touring the English countryside (the highlight was the Cotswolds area, and our stay at Bourton-on-the-Water), returned to London to spend New Year's Eve with Jeannette (who was visiting her daughter Lara) and 3 days sightseeing, flew to Brussels for 3 days of sightseeing, rented a car, and went to Bruges for 2+ days (with a stop in Antwerp). Pictures of the trip may be seen [here](#) and trip details [here](#).

Lauren, who had been getting serious with her boyfriend Sergio, told me in February 2023 that they were renting an apartment and moving in together. In other words, leaving me, leaving the nest. I was happy for her, who seemed to have found true love, but sad for losing her. Then in April, all of us, including Charlie and Kelly, went to Cartagena, Colombia, for the destination wedding of my nephew Anthony, Dicky's son; [see picture of all 6](#). In May we celebrated Mother's Day with my mother a month before she turned 103 years old; [see picture of her with her 3 sons](#). And in August, after years of indecision, she left our home to live in an Assisted Living Facility.

In September 2023 we went to Nevada and I spent 2 days **racing mid-engine Corvettes** like mine (I had raced less powerful cars in the 60s, so this was a bit like on my bucket list), and then Maggie and I went to the Grand Canyon.



Then in October Maggie and my kids threw me a party for my 80th birthday, the highlight of which was me wearing a **very interesting T-shirt which you MUST see**.

In mid-November we went to Medellin to celebrate Maggie and cousin Severito's birthdays. And earlier that month I accepted an offer to sell the beach house in the Bahamas and the sale closed in late December. The move was prompted by the fact that it was being used very little (because without my airplane it was inconvenient and costly to fly to the island), and required considerable attention and maintenance from me. But that's not the whole story, because 6 years earlier Charlie and Lauren had been dead set, adamant, that I **NEVER** sell the house; they wanted nothing in their inheritance except the Bahamas house. So I sat them down a year ago, told them that I would be selling it in about a year so they should go enjoy it while we owned it, and then immediately told them that I would set aside some of the money from the proceeds so they could go to the island often and rent a beach house like ours with that money.

On December 26, 2023, we left with friends Frank and Lissette for a 2-week trip to Europe. First Paris for New Year's, then on to Madrid and tours of Segovia and Cuenca; pictures of the trip may be seen [here](#).



In July and August 2024, in search of a beach comparable to the one we had at our house in the Bahamas, we went first to Aruba and later to Siesta Key in Florida's Gulf coast. Both had been rated superior to Bahamas beaches. Forget about it. Not even close. Need to keep looking. One sad note is that our beloved, gentle Oreo, who had been having health issues, worsened while we were in Aruba and had to be put down.

On October 19 we left with friends Frank and Lissette for a 2-week trip to Europe. First 12 days in Portugal and then 3 days in Spain cities near Portugal; pictures of the trip may be seen [here](#). And soon after returning we celebrated Maggie's birthday with her whole family, including now **3 grandkids**.
