

Andy Turns 60

Only a few weeks ago, I turned fifty
And worried that it would not be nifty.
Now, out of nowhere, I'm sixty,
And wondering if it will be icky.

But today I'm feeling the outlook is good.
Everything still works the way it should.
A simple fact my mind can defend:
I'm younger today than I'll ever be again.

It's amazing how fast six decades go.
I do have a lot of great memories though.
From childhood to adulthood and then
To fatherhood, papahood, and kids again.

I dreamed my dreams in Camptonville School,
Hoping my life would be real cool.
Now I've found as I've met the daily needs,
My life has been good so far, indeed.

While my athletic skills were hard to find,
God blessed me with a usable mind.
And despite the abuses I laid on my body,
My overall health has not been too shoddy.

I grew up to the war in Viet Nam,
And my generation saw it as a sham.
I decided to serve my Country anyway,
And went to Jersey and Europe for a stay.

I came out to a world full of drugs,
Where people believed in peace, love, and hugs.
I was fortunate to find a nice hippy girl,
That's given me a 37 year whirl.

Katie's had her ups and downs:
Ranging from belly laughs to frowns.
She's stayed by me and did not roam.
She's always made our house a home.

Kathy, thanks for the party you gave to me.
Thanks for making our family three.
And even though I bitch when you make a mess,
You're the love of my life and my friend that's best.

Ryan, thanks for putting up with your old man,
Always helping me whenever you can.
I look at you and it's plain to see
You're a better dad than I'll ever be.

My life's been very blessed by two simple facts.
One is named Electra and one is named Max.
Smart and beautiful hearts, bodies, and souls.
Work hard my darlings and reach for your goals.

Kathy came with a truck load of kin:
Sisters, brothers, and more babies again.
Strong sister opinions are fundamental,
But in the end, they're not *too* judgmental.

We've had many family birthday parties mixed.
I didn't know so many \$20 bills exist.
One family thing I've been wondering about some:
Where did all these danged lap dogs come from?

I came from an immediate family of seven.
Now all but two of us live up in heaven.
But I still consider myself brimming with luck,
Enjoying my loving, surveying brother Chuck

My career set my heart and mind on fire.
Surveying like Washington, Lincoln, and McGuire.
Working with Ken Baker and his advice:
"If you'd work a little faster, that would be nice."

I love the planning of our great town,
Tracking and involving in what's going down.
Building community brick by brick,
But planning decisions have never been quick.

I've worked as a loaner nearly by myself,
Picking up and using every skill on my shelf.
My work with Kathy, Cindy, and Ryan was cool,
Keith, Nancy, Karen, and Amber was too.

Then I joined back up with my old friends:
Ken, Tom, Bill, and John were around again.
Finally one day in 2004 I began hearing
That I was *running* Nevada City Engineering.

Now I work along side an incredible staff.
We work hard but always find time to laugh.
We never met a problem that we didn't intrigue us,
Even if some of them tend to fatigue us.

No poem of my life could be complete,
Without mention of motorcycles out on the street.
What a wonderful pastime of light meditation,
Regardless of the company or the destination.

I've barreled down the roads in this beautiful place,
Bugs in my teeth and a smile on my face.
Been to Nevada, Arizona, and Utah by bike;
And Oregon, Montana, and Idaho I like.

Here's to my motorcycle sisters and brothers!
We shared worlds of freedom like no others.
I'm ever looking forward to our next outing again.
Lets hope we can all ride well until the very end.

One thing great about getting older,
Is you have those life long friends at your shoulder.
Richard, Jack, Larry, Ernie, and inlaw brothers,
Rolly, Tom, Tim and so many others.

One of the hugest treasures of my life,
Is this beautiful place where I live with my wife.
Not just our house and our little town,
But all of God's country that lies all around.

How could anyone live anywhere else today,
When there's a place like this where we can stay?
Mountains, trees, and cold green rivers,
Starry, starry nights that make me quiver.

Besides my best friends, coworkers, and family,
There's a world of community friends around me.
Working hard to contribute to where we live.
I'm always so impressed by how much you give.

Every time my age gets an "oh" on the end,
I like taking this accounting of where I've been.
One good thing about a midlife crisis now, if any:
It means I'll live to be a hundred and twenty!

Thank you my life long friends for coming today,
For helping me continue merrily on my way.
My Loves, if I live to be a hundred and three,
I could never repay all that you've done for me.

Andy Cassano
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