

'Superman' Dad scared off thugs

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Thursday, 15 August 2013 14:37 -



Editor's note: The following story is about a 1973 family vacation with Glenn, Sr., and Beverly Nelson as told by Lori Edwards of Gothenburg.

My family's most eventful and longest vacation was when I was 11 and had three younger brothers.

Dad had bought an old school bus and built four beds in back with two bunk beds and a kitchen table that folded down to a bed for mom and dad. There was storage under the seats and a huge water tank for dishes. It also had a heater, a closet, a small fridge, kitchen stove top and a little sink.

He had put hours into renovating the bus and painted the outside as well as welding brackets on the front for a little Honda 90 for emergencies.

Dad was so proud of all the work—our trip was to California or Bust!

Our route planned was to drive south to Texas, then west. The first night we spent at a roadside pull-off where we were all alone. We were sleeping when several men outside started banging on the camper—maybe five men. My parents were already awake and the men were demanding and yelling for us to come outside. They were going to rob us!

I was scared and my younger brothers started to cry in fear. Mom and dad were talking quietly, then I heard my dad move around inside the front of the camper. The men were still beating on the metal sides of the camper demanding we open up, "Now!"

I could not believe what happened next. My "Superman," my dad, in the most authoritative and gruffest voice I had ever heard said, "Hey! You don't know me, but I'm 6'3" and 300 pounds. I have five brothers and we spar daily. I'm still able to take them down and they are military men."

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"If I come out there, I can guarantee you I will be the last man standing. I'm protecting my wife and four kids, and I got this revolver with six shots—that should take out a few of you before I'm able to take out the rest of you." "So, give me a minute here, I'm putting on my boots and we'll do a little rumble, okay boys?"

"Wow," My dad was my hero! The "Big, bad men," all five, skedaddled and got out of there, driving away fast!

My dad still went outside and checked the perimeter of the camper. He later swore to us that someone outside had an accident in their pants! This was in a little quiet Kansas town, not a big city!

Other happenings in that camper were when my middle brother adopted a frog or a turtle, which he lost in the camper, and which became a dead "air freshener." All windows had to be open at all times the rest of our trip.



We visited family in Arizona they had cool barrels that someone had made into aquariums, we visited a family in Los Angeles, saw Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, went to a safari place you drive through, like in Jurassic Park. We went to Sea World, to the ocean, and I ate my first McDonald's, as there were none yet in North Platte where we lived.

Gas prices were 19 cents a gallon and I was amazed at six blocks of cars lined up waiting to get gas. At 11, I thought it was stupid to drive ahead and stop the car until the line moved again, one car-length closer to get gas—wasting gas to get gas.

My body didn't agree with Los Angeles' water and I had to keep using Pepto-Bismol every day there. I started to feel "pink"—good color for a girl.

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Leaving California, my parents loved peaches and mom had canned before, so we had bought a few cases to bring back to Nebraska. But, the state patrol at the border had a road block and checked out the camper. They informed us we could not take any produce out of California unless a trucker did it. So, lets just say we had a "peach party" and spent the next few hours gorging ourselves eating, not apples but peaches! Let's just say the rest of the trip Pepto-Bismol was still my best friend, and I had a few join—all my loving family!

Memories... I'm so proud of my "Superman" dad, and it was a very memorable journey. Gas prices haven't been the same.

It was our "Nightmare Vacation," maybe another National Lampoon's movie?