

## **My Favorite Memories of Uncle Dennis – by Craig Copple (Nephew)**

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- One of the greatest things anyone has taught me came from Uncle Dennis. He taught me how to be kind to people that you don't have to be kind too. The server at a restaurant, the bell boy, the random cashier. He was always pleasant to everyone. He would say something nice to them or try to make them smile. I never heard him get short or impatient with people like that. Every where I go, I feel the need to say hello or try to be extra nice to those strangers that I'll never see again and it's because Uncle Dennis did it and it was a way of life for him. It was who he was. So for me when I judge someone's true character, it's if they are nice to people when they don't have to be.
- Being at the ranch as a little kid and riding the 3 wheelers was the best when we were kids. They all belonged to Uncle Dennis and for whatever reason, I seemed to crash those things left and right and he never yelled or got upset but always laughed. I remember I left one of his 3 wheelers parked at the top of the house on the hill and left it in neutral and went inside. I came out and the 3 wheeler was gone and had rolled all the way down the road into the barbed wire fence above the creek and when uncle Dennis heard, he just laughed and made some joke about "Craigy and the 3 wheeler in neutral." He was always so patient and never got upset over things like that.
- I also used to remember being a little kid and so excited to wake up early at the ranch and go on a good horse ride with Uncle Dennis. I remember thinking, I better not tie this lead rope to the fence wrong after uncle Dennis has showed me forty times. He than would walk up and say, "Man, Craigy who taught you to tie this rope?" Of course, I had some messed up granny knot on there and it wasn't the way he taught us so he would make me re-tie it. Also, he was so particular with the front cinch strap on the horse. He would always adjust it so it was "just right." Now I can't cinch a horse with out sticking my fingers in there and not thinking of Uncle Dennis. I even go and check everyone else's cinch just like he used too. Man I'm going to miss that.
- I remember when I was a hot headed teenager and just lost a basketball game. During the game I had thrown some fits and yelled at the refs and everyone else. After the game my mom and dad were trying to talk to me and tell me that I can't act like that and were scolding me when my mom turned to uncle Dennis and asked him to talk to me because she wasn't getting through to me. He could have railed on me and told me not to act like that, but he looked at me patiently and I remember this clear as day said, "Craigy, someday you'll understand." And walked off. I was always so caught in the moment of here and now and never thought about future and having perspective and he gave me perspective and helped me realize that those games are so small in the grand scheme of things and for the first time in my teenage life something clicked. Now, whenever anyone acts up or looses it, I always remember those words from Uncle Dennis and wish that they could gain that perspective.

- I remember as I was leaving Sky Harbor Airport for my mission as I was saying good bye to everyone, as soon as I got to Uncle Dennis he just hugged me and started sobbing. He had always been the big, strong, man that I looked up to and to see some emotion from him gave me comfort knowing that it was ok for me to show emotion as well. I rarely cry, but for whatever reason seeing him cry, made it seem ok and I wasn't as scared to leave for two years anymore.
- Also, I remember seminary graduation and all the bishops would pass out their diplomas they would shake hands with the youth. Uncle Dennis had more youth than any other ward and he was the only bishop that hugged every kid up there. You could tell he loved the youth and they responded to that. I remember some of my friends asking if there was any way they could bypass their bishop and go talk to Bishop Barney because they knew he cared about them. When I got put in the bishopric in Havasu, I tried to remember how Uncle Dennis did it and reached out to the youth and loved them instead of always taking a more business approach. Uncle Dennis always drove back from the ranch to go to his church meetings on Sunday so it was really hard for me to miss my Sunday meetings because I had been taught by Uncle Dennis and I knew better so I don't know how many times I drove back to Havasu late Saturday or early Sunday to be at my meetings because of his example.
- I'm sure I'll pay for this one, but the paint ball wars with Uncle Dennis were awesome. He wasn't afraid to get shot and we weren't afraid to shoot him. My best memory is him hiding between two trees and since he was a big man, his sides stuck out and were uncovered. He just sat there and we would shoot and hit him on his side and he would howl and shoot back.
- Riding figure eights in the beautiful meadows south of Telluride and Uncle Dennis' horse being so exhausted it just sat down right in front of some hippies. They were so impressed that he could make his horse sit down on its belly so he could get off.
- I'll miss not hearing "Hey Lazarus has risen" after sleeping in at the ranch in Muss Hog Heaven.
- Sitting with Darin and Uncle Dennis driving around in his suburban and eating Fritos in the front seat or going to his office at Val Vista Lakes
- Spending the night in the basement and calling 911. Within 1 minute we hear his booming voice, "Darin, Craig, The police just called" I will never forget the way he called out down into the basement. His voice just penetrated everything.
- The look on his face when Bryan would get on the horse from the wrong side. Nothing could replace those stares that he would give.
- Meeting hundreds of people and everyone always knew Dennis Barney and loved him. People would tell me all these nice stories of how they knew him and so forth. He had friends everywhere and I was proud to tell them he was my uncle.

- Trying to pull his cowboy boots off after a long ride. Them suckers were tough to get off.
- I remember when he got bucked off of Turbo at the ranch and gave everyone a scare. I was holding the bridal while Darin helped him on. For whatever reason Turbo bucked and Dennis fell pretty good. Afterwards, Uncle Dennis joked how come I didn't catch him and I replay that over and over again in slow motion and I still don't know if I could have per say caught him, but maybe made the fall a little softer but I wish I would have done something because I still feel bad for not having done anything to help him.
- I have this internal thing inside of me that whenever I go to a really good restaurant, I always think of Uncle Dennis. I literally had 2 places in Havasu and 2 up here in Colorado that for whatever reason if Uncle Dennis would pass through, I would recommend them to him. It's the Uncle Dennis internal restaurant meter. I judge it based off of how he would like it. I know that must sound weird.
- Uncle Dennis always had the saddle's and tack for the horses and since Matt and I would go with him riding quite a bit, he would always have things just for us. Darin had his own saddle and I know he didn't want us to feel bad so Matt and I had our own saddles when we would go out. Two years ago I went to Colorado and the Barney's didn't come and Bishop George had a horse but no saddle for me. Bishop pulled up and our first day riding he handed me a saddle from Uncle Dennis. This wasn't just any saddle, it was the one that had TDB engrained on the leather. It was his prized possession that he always used because he said it was the best one he had and the most comfortable saddle. He let me take it and use it even though he wasn't there. He didn't give the old beat up saddle, but his prized TDB saddle.