

Roots in Ripon

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Chuck Roots

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Aspirations of Progeny

In the 1950s, the beloved Arthur Gordon "Art" Linkletter had a TV show that was always entertaining. Perhaps the best-known segment of this weekly show was, *Kids Say the Darndest Things!* Well, I've got a couple of my own!

A couple of years ago I bought a new cell phone. It was the iPhone 6Plus. On my previous phone I had two or three different apps I had downloaded that acted as flashlights. With my new phone I went looking for my flashlight apps to no avail. So, I was standing in the kitchen fumbling with the phone, wondering where these apps were when then seven-year-old granddaughter Alyssa says, "I'll show you, Granddaddy." I sheepishly handed over my phone while having this sinking feeling that I was about to be shown up by a second grader. My premonitions were correct! With one deft swipe of her little finger she made another screen appear on my phone. She quickly tapped the glass surface and Voila! A very bright light came on. She handed the phone back and resumed working on her homework.

At this point I should have left well enough alone. But, Nooooo, I had to step right in it. I said, "*You were moving too fast for me. Show me what you did.*" She gave me a patient, parental look, reached for my phone and said, "*Granddaddy, the new iPhone 6 comes with a flashlight app built in.*" "Oh," I said. "*I didn't know that.*" It didn't even occur to me that a flashlight device was built in. I just stood there with what I can only assume was a foolish look on my face. Alyssa simply returned to her homework.

Just a few weeks ago friends from Texas came to visit. Of course we got around to talking about our grandkids and showing our latest pictures of this newly emerging generation. The way Frank explained this story about one of his grandkids, the college being attended by this grandkid was very expensive. On a recent visit with this progeny they asked what they were planning to do once they graduated from college. Without a moment's hesitation, the child said, "*I want to be a professional dog walker.*" Our friends were stunned, to say the least. Several hundred thousand dollars for the best education money can buy to become . . . a professional dog walker! I looked it up - "*An average dog walker salary in New York City is \$45,000.*" I may come out of retirement.

Brooklyne is our other granddaughter, nine-years-old, who lives about a half-hour from us, so Isaura and I are fairly active in her life and grandson Colson's on a weekly basis. Isaura was down taking care of Brook and Colson a few Fridays ago when Brook announced to Meema (Isaura) that she knew what she wanted to be

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when she grew up. My wife, of course, encouraged her to share this revelation. The conversation had been about Brook's natural artistic abilities which prompted my wife to suggest she might pursue that as a career path. Brooklyne quickly nixed that idea. *"No, I don't want to do that. I want to be a lawyer!"* Somewhat surprised at this pronouncement, Isaura then asked, *"Why do you want to be a lawyer, Brook?"* Brooklyne smiled and said, *"Because lawyers get to argue. And I'm really good at arguing!"* We all had a good laugh at that! I believe Brook could convince me the moon is made of cheese!

My last foray into children and their career choices brings us back to Alyssa, now nine-years-old, but turns ten later this month. A couple of weeks ago, our daughter Laura, asked her daughter Alyssa, what she wanted to be when she grows up. Well, we all know how much she loves animals, having expressed interest in becoming a veterinarian before. So, she pops off with this comment, *"I want to be a vet, or a professional horseback rider . . . NO!"* Leaving her parents in suspense, she then says, *"I want to be a professional bed tester!"* Our son-in-law Ken, says, *"A what?"* Alyssa responds, *"You know, Daddy! A professional bed tester where you take naps on beds and get paid for it to see how comfy they are."*

Okay, so I checked on how much a professional bed tester makes. The motel chain, Travelodge, has a professional bed tester who makes \$53,000 a year! I'm seriously thinking about coming out of retirement now!

I can't wait to hear what Colson wants to be. Right now, he's only five and isn't thinking about careers just yet. At least I don't think he is.

When I was their age I wanted to be a fireman riding a big red fire truck with a Dalmatian riding in the seat. Or a professional baseball player (Yea for the Houston Astros – 2017 World Series Champs!). That was about the extent of it for me.

But I do think I might be cut out for this bed tester job. I'm sure there's a phone number I can call. Where is that number? It's right here somewhere . . .