

How we got here and where we're going

As with most things in life, and especially in my world, there is a story.

In the beginning (remember how many of my lessons and stories began that way-almost biblical) we (my wife and I) were in Connecticut for a party celebrating my mother-in-law's 90th birthday. My sister-in-law asked that I gather some pictures from various sources and make a slide show to play in the background during the party. I was traveling with me a portable hard drive that has all my stuff, including, my picture collection, so like a good B-I-L I followed my instructions and made a show out of about 90 pictures that looped and were projected on a screen.

It was a big hit both with my mother-in-law and her guests. Thinking about the whole issue, when we got home to Miami, I looked into digital photo frames. Over the years (decades), I'd purchased a couple of them for my parents, but, they were too limited and ended up on a shelf, rarely turned on. This time, technology seems to have hit a sweet spot. I got, both for my mother-in-law and my own mother (who is 93-soon to be 94), frames from Aura. These frames don't store the pictures, but, play from cloud storage. Aura claims that there is no limit to the number of photos you can load.

I scoured my hard drive and found about 1,000 pictures that would interest my mother and another 800 for my mother-in-law. I managed the WiFi installation at my mother's but, there was some back and forth before the one in Connecticut was finally installed. It wasn't difficult, just someone with a little tech savvy had to be there.

With an invitation, others can also add pictures to the cloud. Pictures can be uploaded from your phone or a computer. My sister gets to add pictures of the great-grandkids to my mother's frame and my sister-in-law has been adding pics of her kids to her mother's. I am no longer the only uploader, and we all get to participate in this trip down memory lane.

Which brings me to digitizing entire albums. Looking at the bookshelves in my mother's living room, there are many dozens of photo albums with pictures dating back to the 1900s (rescued after WWII). I took a few home and started to scan the pictures and add them to my mother's frame. This turned out to be quite time consuming. So, I tried Plan B. I took my digital camera and took pictures of each page of an album, the pictures in situ. While I should spend hundreds of dollars on a photo-stand, I get reasonable results diffusing the light from the window by my desk. Then, using AutoSplitter, I am able to split each photo into the individual pictures, and to flip them (if needed). I was so impressed with AutoSplitter that I registered for the software, which in my opinion, is quite reasonably priced. At this point, my mother's frame has almost 6,000 pictures, playing at random, and she (my mother) can spend hours lost in history and memories. I still have dozens of albums to process. It is a very rewarding process.

OK...I know you know me (or you wouldn't be here) and you must realize that I will eventually get to some point. [My wife's comment on reading this, was "FINALLY!"]

As I was photographing one particular album, from 1980, there was a newspaper clipping about the Hydrolab mission I was on. The clipping was old and tattered, but, it was there. If I was going to share it with my "world," I needed a better copy. I went to the FIU Biscayne Bay Campus library, where a very helpful young man at the counter was able to access The Miami Herald archives and download the relevant page.

Two years ago, as I was retiring, some of my students suggested I start a pod-cast. In not so gentle words, they said that I clearly loved the sound of my own voice and while floating in the pool might be relaxing, I would eventually think MY WORDS merited a hearing. I'm still not sure if I agree with them, but, we'll see if there is a "demand" for the musings of Dr.G. The 1980 article cried out for sharing.

And that as they say, is how we got here.

Where am I going with this? I don't really know. We'll see if anyone cares to listen to me. There is a counter, a Google form for feedback, and a guestbook on this page so if you are "out there," I'll know.

Sometimes, while reading the newspaper, I think about how I might incorporate an article into my day's lesson. Then, I remember there are no more day's lessons for me. This forum might scratch that itch, as well as the itch to communicate with former students. (Feel free to advertise this to former students who might not be on Facebook/LinkedIn, or in any event, not connected with me on those platforms.)

If there are topics you want me to offer my 3-cents on (it was 2 cents, but, you know, inflation), drop me a line drg.atm@gmail.com use the feedback form or guestbook.

The bell doesn't dismiss you, the teacher does, and I'm done for now! Class dismissed.

Dr.G.

Neither Aura nor AutoSplitter has compensated me in any way for their inclusion in my story.

The script is not an exact transcript of the podcast, but, rather the script that was read. I can't help but adlib.