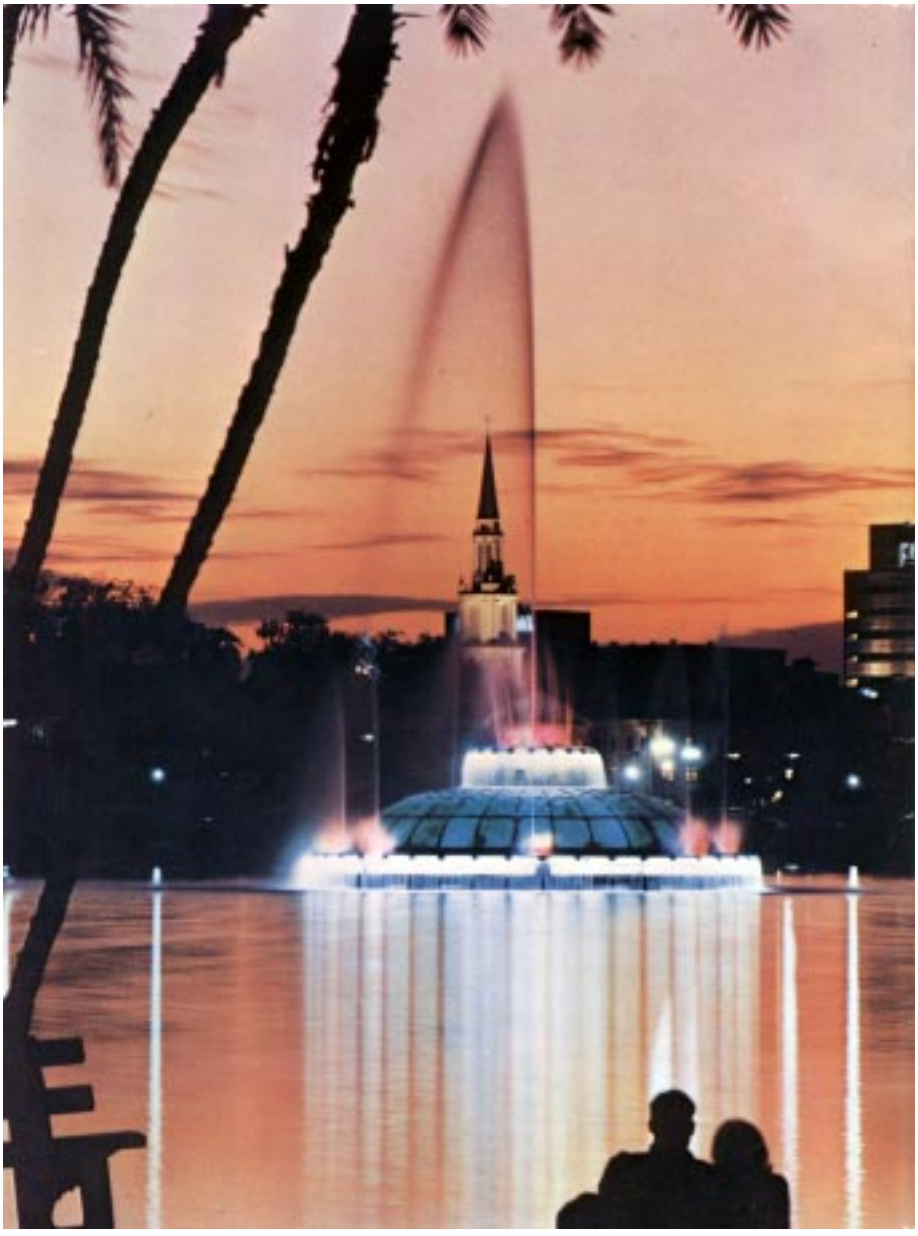
Orlando, Florida

During our 1957 vacation trip to Florida, I found a job as advertising art director for American Fire & Casualty Company in Orlando. Suzanne stayed with Sylvia's parents and David stayed with mine while Sylvia and I returned to Massachusetts. I let Raytheon know that I would be quitting in two weeks and Sylvia and I got busy preparing for our move to a rented house in Casselberry, just north of Orlando.

While we lived in Casselberry, we attended the Jefferson Street Church of Christ in downtown Orlando. The windows were open and the smell of food cooking at the restaurant next door made it difficult to pay attention to the sermon.

During that time all of the CofC churches in Orlando fellowshipped with each other. I remember attending a "dinner on the grounds" and afternoon singing one Sunday at the Par Avenue Church of Christ where brethren from all of the congregations participated.







Sylvia, Suzanne, David and I Christmas 1957.



My office overlooking downtown Orlando at American Fire & Casualty Company.

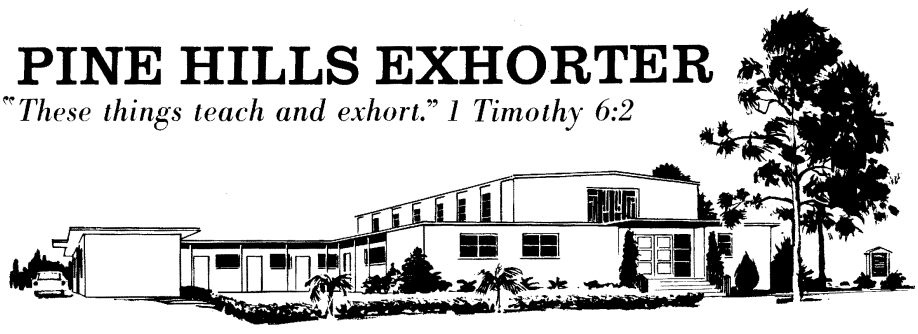


Above: Hudson Street. Below: Mother, Robynne, Suzanne, David, Linda.









In 1958 Robynne was born. Sylvia called me from the doctor's office and said she was going across the street to the hospital and check in. I asked her if she wanted me to come, too.

She said, "No, you don't need to."

I took what she said at face value and kept working. I remember being very nervous. I couldn't get my mind off what Sylvia was going through. After a while my supervisor encouraged me to go to the hospital to be with her. I did, but by that time she was already in the delivery room.

In the waiting room I was closer than I had been the other two times, but Sylvia wouldn't have been aware of that.

When we received the cash settlement from the auto and truck accident after we had already paid all the medical bills ourselves, we were able to use the money for a down payment on a house in Robinswood on the west side of Orlando. 6121 Hudson Street would be our home until September 1979.

The Pine Hills Church of Christ had just completed their new building a few blocks away. We became members and worked with that church for over 20 years.

In the beginning my involvement consisted of attending, warming a pew, and waiting in our car after services were over while Sylvia and other adults stood and visited outside the building and the children ran and played.

When Connie W. Adams became our preacher, he encouraged me to take a more active part in the teaching program. He also got me involved with our church paper, The Pine Hills Exhorter, which he edited. That's when I began writing articles.

< Masthead art and design by Bob.

Over the years I became very busy with church work. I was a deacon, responsible for the Bible classes (curriculum, study manuals, visual aids, and teacher assignments); taught teacher training classes; created and illustrated *Theophilus* and other teaching illustrations; made ads, posters, and banners for our spring and fall gospel meetings; and later served as an elder.

But I'm not proud of all that. I regret much of it. Our children grew up during this time.

During the late 50s and early 60s I suffered from migraine headaches, which severely handicapped my participation in family life. I had little control over that, but as my health improved with years of treatment and therapy I put myself more and more into church work.

Much of the time when I was working at the church building, I should have been home with Sylvia and our children. But by now, Sylvia had come to associate my presence with another demand on her time—to keep the children quiet and to make sure that I was "happy." She did not seem glad to see me when I came home.

In 1960 I left the insurance company to work as a senior graphic designer for the Martin Company, an aero-space corporation. Nine years later I became an art director with Shattuck Roether Frailey and Wilson, an advertising agency.

After seven years I left the ad agency to start my own business and did free-lance work for various corporations, including Tupperware and Walt Disney World. It was during this time that I started publishing a magazine called *Gospel Graphics*, which soon expanded and became *Gospel Teacher*. We also sold Bible school materials, reference books, and Bibles by mail.



Back row, left to right: Richard Nave, Margie Mecchi, Joe Buteau. Front row: Madeline Nave, Sylvia, David, Bob, Mother Buteau holding Robynne. July 1958.



Back row, left to right: Madeline holding Robynne, Michael Nave, Johnny Buteau, Mother and Dad Buteau, Bob holding Suzanne, Sylvia, David, Dotty Buteau, Joe Buteau. 1959.



Robynne.



Suzanne.



David.



At party with Beverly McDermit.







With Dennis Briggs.





I have fond memories of the times some of us got together to "pick and sing" while Connie W. Adams was our preacher. In the photo above Connie plays the mandolin and Lynn Robinson plays the guitar. Bernard DeNoe (steel guitar) and Frank Belue (ukulele) were also regulars. They let me play bass. We called ourselves "The Sons of the Palmetto" and played country, bluegrass, and Hawaiian music. Connie's wife, Bobbie, made us matching shirts (above right).

A few years later after the others moved away, Carey Dillinger (right side of photo on right), talented young lead guitarist named Dan, and I carried on the tradition, but with a different style of music.

Shown here are a few snapshots taken during our social gatherings.

When Jere Frost became our preacher, he and I upgraded the Pine Hills Exhorter from mimeograph to offset printing. He did the "typesetting" on an IBM Selectric typwriter, and I did the art, headlines, and paste-up for the printer each week. One day I told Jere about the idea for a comic strip I had been thinking about for ten years. I showed him a few ideas and rough sketches. He was receptive to this method of teaching and agreed to try it as a regular feature. So, on February 6, 1966, Theophilus was born. The illustrations wasted no time getting readers' attention -- and response! Most of it was favorable.





Marvin Scarboro and Jere Frost.



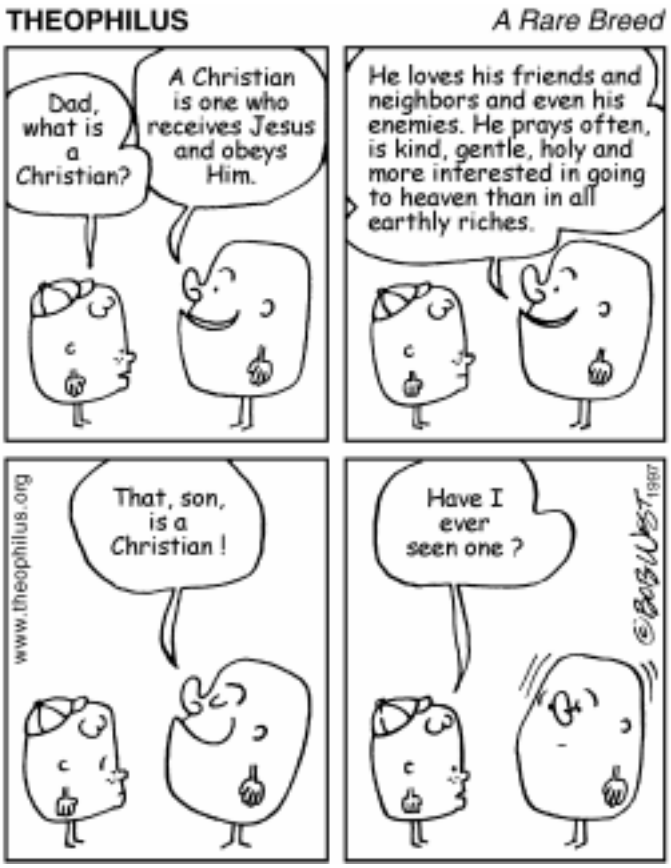
Jere Frost (center) with Bill and Fae Barker and their children.

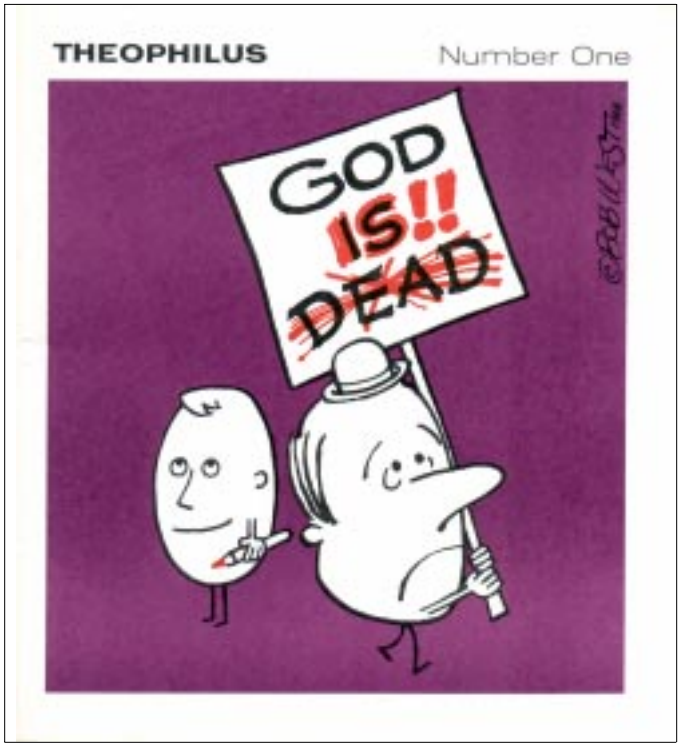


Frank Grimes.



Elmer and Mary Van Cleef.

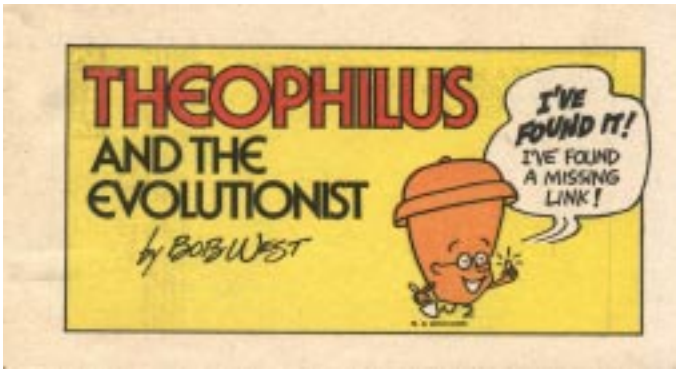




One of the early Theophilus cartoons (left), the first Theophilus book (above), a Theophilus tract and another tract in cartoon format (below).



Bob, Frank Belue, and Bernard Denoe.







Bill Barker, Sara Nicholson, and Jim Word.









Left to right: Dad Buteau, Barbara Buteau, Michael Nave, Joe Buteau, Sonny (Michael II) Nave, Mother Buteau, Richard Nave, Nelson Jones, Janet Buteau, Trudy Jones, Steven Jones, Sylvia, Madeline Nave, Johnny Buteau, Dotty Buteau. Front row: Cathy Buteau, Suzanne, Robynne, David.





The Sons of the Palmettos perform at a rodeo. Left to right: Bernard DeNoe, Connie Adams, Bob (singing), Lynn Robinson, Gene Byram. Central Florida, circa 1963.























During September 1962 David appeared every morning 9:30 to 10:00 for two weeks on Miss Nancy Stillwell's TV kindergarten show, Romper Room. Robynne appeared 3 days as a substitute for a sick regular. Photos by Sylvia.











Batman and Robynne.

Left: the West kids with aunt Trudy.



A beautiful example of Sylvia's handiwork. ^







The kids' treehouse. >



The kids with uncle Gaylon.



Thank you, Lord.